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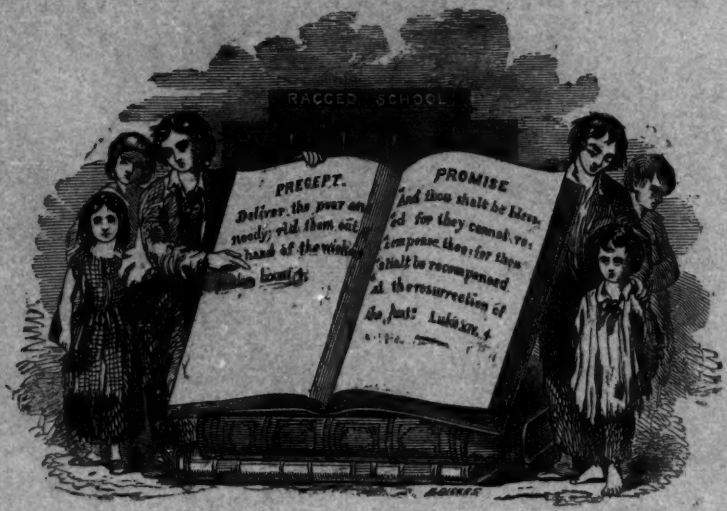
THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION

MAGAZINE.

No. CCXXX. FEBRUARY, 1868. Vol. XX.



"The word of the Lord endureth for ever."—1 Peter i, 25.

PROFITS DEVOTED TO RAGGED SCHOOLS.

LONDON:
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* * All Communications to be addressed to the Editor, 1, Exeter Hall, London.
* Orders for Advertisements to be sent to Robert K. Burt, Printer, Wine Office Court, Fleet Street.

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NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Received with thanks: Mr. Robineon; Mrs. Varney; Mrs. Reade; Mr. Tait, and J. R.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.—The thanks of the Committee are presented to Mrs. Warner for a parcel of clothing for Industrial Classes; to Miss Hawkins, for a parcel of clothing and material for Industrial Classes; to the Hon. Mrs. Annesley Gore, for a parcel of petticoats and capes; to "Memorial of Otho St. George," for £1 for food for hungry little boys, and 400 copies of New Year's Address; to Mrs. Martin, for a parcel of clothing, shoes, and books; to Mrs. Reade, for a parcel of clothing for boys and girls; to Mrs. Keysell, for a parcel of clothing; to Mrs. Newcome, for a parcel containing sixty-seven articles of clothing for boys and girls; to I. R. F. F., for a parcel of old clothing; to the Ladies of the Twickenham Working Society, for a parcel of clothing for Gun Street School; to H. H., for a parcel of tracts and magazines.

Parcels of Left-off Wearing Apparel, for distribution to the Children, and for our Industrial Classes, also Books or Magazines for forming School Libraries, will be thankfully acknowledged by Mr. JOSEPH G. GENT, 1, Exeter Hall, W.C.

Parcels of waste paper, old magazines, reports, &c., &c., can be made good use of, and will be thankfully acknowledged by Mr. GENT, 1, Exeter Hall.

OUR CHILDREN'S MAGAZINE.

ENLARGED AND IMPROVED SERIES.

THE February number of this Magazine—a NEW Periodical in every respect but the name—will contain:—

HOW THE BATTLE WAS WON. Chap. II. (*With Illustration.*)
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A SAILOR BOY'S FAITH.
WEIGHING THE BABY.
BORDERED TEXT.
WHAT MINNIE THOUGHT.
A HUMAN AIR-PUMP.
STORY OF THE ORPHANS.
WHAT GREW FROM A POTATO.
SOMETHING ABOUT EVERYTHING:
Working Men's Machinery.
Grass Sponges.
British Silver.
Antidote for Poison.
FEEDING THE WOLVES. (*With Illustration.*)

The *Printer's Journal* of last month, when reviewing the January number, recorded that—"This is the first of a new series issued by the Ragged School Union. It is a great improvement on the small edition. It has a great merit in children's books—nearly all the matter is original."

Price One Halfpenny. Published on the First Day of each Month.

A BOON TO RAGGED SCHOOLS ONLY,

FOR A LIMITED TIME,

THE FOLLOWING

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Will be supplied at considerably under the published prices, viz.:—

52 Lessons, on demy sheets, published at 3s., at 1s. 6d.
Ditto, on demy half-sheets „ 6s., at 2s. 6d.
Ditto, demy whole sheets „ 8s., at 3s. 6d.
62 Lessons, super-royal sheets, extra large type, published at 12s. at 4s.

Apply to Mr. GENT, Sec., London Ragged School Union, Exeter Hall, London.

NEW YEARS' GIFTS.

30,000 CRIPPLES IN ENGLAND.

Subscriptions are much needed. May the Lord incline those who know the blessing of a sound body to help these sadly afflicted young women, some of whom can but crawl on the ground. C. BLUNT, Sec., Cripples' Home, 17A, Marylebone Road, W.

TO MANAGERS OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

You are solicited earnestly to order Hats or Bonnets, or Articles for Christmas Trees, at the CRIPPLES' HOME, 17A, MARYLEBONE ROAD.

J. E. EAREE,

BREAKFAST AND TEA CONTRACTOR,

127, HACKNEY ROAD, NEAR SHOREDITCH CHURCH.

J. E. E. respectfully begs to inform the Clergy, Superintendents of Schools, and others who are in the practice of commemorating their Anniversaries, etc., by Public Breakfasts and Tea Meetings, that he has every requisite for such occasions, comprising Tables, Coppers, and China to any extent, in a superior style, at extremely moderate charges.

J. E. E. tenders his sincere thanks to those ladies and gentlemen who have hitherto favoured him with their kind patronage, and hopes by strict attention to ensure a continuance of the same; he also begs most respectfully to solicit the favour of their recommendation.

Rout Seats on Reasonable Terms. Vans, and every requisite for Excursion Parties, with the entire Management, taken by Contract.

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References are kindly permitted to be made to the Secretaries of the Ragged School Union and the Temperance League.

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New Edition, just out (Eighty-seventh) of

Mr. Geo. Thos. Congreve's Work,

Post Free for FIVE STAMPS, from the Author, COOMBE LODGE, PECKHAM.

CONTENTS OF THE WORK.

PART I. Introduction
Causes, Susceptibility
Forebodings of Danger
First Stage—Second Stage
Third Stage—Closing Scene
Anatomical Appearances
Fallacies of Treatment
The TRUE Treatment
On Diet, Air, Exercise
The Passions.

PART II. On Catarrh, Influenza; on Hooping Cough; on Chronic Bronchitis; on Asthma.

PART III. is a selection of interesting and extraordinary

CASES OF CURE,

Many of which had been abandoned by former medical advisers as hopeless. "Every person of weak lungs, delicate habit, or debilitated constitution, should read this book."

NOTICE.—Mr. GEO. THOS. CONGREVE may be seen at his new residence, COOMBE LODGE, RYE LANE, PECKHAM, on the usual mornings (Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday) until Twelve o'clock.

CASE of a YOUNG FARMER at BISHOP STORTFORD.

In February last, Mr. THOMAS ASHWELL, of Park Farm, by recommendation of patients of mine at Brighton, came to me. The following are some of the particulars noted in my book:—

"Family tendency to chest disease. An aunt and sister had died in decline. Decided symptoms for four months. Had been under advice at home and a physician in London. An attack of pleurisy had accompanied the usual consumptive symptoms, for which he had been blistered and had applications of iodine. On examination, the left lung decidedly diseased."

The patient saw me again in March, April, May, and July, with gradual improvement manifested each time, so that on the last visit I was able to sanction a gradual leaving off the means employed.

In September the patient wrote me stating that he was quite well; had exerted himself very much at harvest time without the least relapse, expressing also his intention to recommend the medicine everywhere, and requesting me to add his case to my book.

Interesting Communication from Rev. A. O. WELLSTED, M.A. (Incumbent), St. Thomas's Parsonage, Bethnal Green.

"Dear Sir,—Allow me again to express my thanks for your invaluable medicine. I have tried it on others as well as my own daughter. The results are wonderful. The chest is relieved almost immediately. I could use gallons of it."—Oct. 16, 1867.

"I thank you for your kind offer to reduce the price for my poor people. It has wrought wonders for them. Any reference might *be made to me*.—Dec. 18, 1967.

HOUSES CLEARED OF WASTE UPON THE SHORTEST NOTICE.

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(LATE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE RAG-COLLECTING BRIGADE OF THE LONDON RAGGED SCHOOLS),

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MANUFACTORY: GIPPING WORKS, IPSWICH.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL.—In consequence of the Holborn Valley Improvements, BURT'S STEAM PRINTING WORKS are removed FROM Holborn Hill TO Wine Office Court, Fleet Street.

FRIENDLESS AND FALLEN.

PRESIDENT, REV. CANON DALE.

THE NEW YEAR.

The Committee of the London Female Preventive and Reformatory Institution now earnestly solicit Contributions in aid of their Mission of Mercy in 1868, as carried on in the following Homes—

No. 1.—CENTRAL HOME, 200, EUSTON ROAD, N.W. *Reformatory.*
No. 2.—5, CAMDEN STREET ... ... *Reformatory.*
No. 3.—13, CORNWALL PLACE, HOLLOWAY ... ... *Reformatory.*
No. 4.—5, PARSONS GREEN, FULHAM ... ... *Reformatory.*
No. 5.—195, HAMPSTEAD ROAD, N.W. ... ... } *Exclusively for Friendless Young Women*
No. 6.—7, PARSONS GREEN, FULHAM, S.W. ... ... } *and Servants of good character.*

No. 26, FITZROY PLACE, EUSTON ROAD, *Night Reception Home; open all night for the immediate admission of penitents.*

Total number admitted up to December 31st, Two Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty.

Suitable applicants are never rejected while there are vacancies in the Homes.

These Homes provide accommodation for about 150 inmates.

BANKERS—Messrs. BOSANQUET & Co., 73, Lombard Street, E.C.; F. NICHOLLS, Esq. (of the Committee), 14, Old Jewry Chambers, E.C.

Mr. E. W. THOMAS, Secretary, 200, Euston Road, N.W.

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS—(*continued*).

Emigration Fund.

Passmore, Miss	£1	1	0
Western, W., Esq.	10	0	0
Wright, Mrs. W.	1	0	0

Refuge Fund.

Ferrand, Mrs.	0	10	6
Passmore, Miss	1	1	0

Excursion Fund.

Ferrand, Mrs.	0	10	6
Goff, Miss	0	10	0
Scott, Miss	1	0	0

School Fund.

Clare Market.

Boobbyer, Miss L. L.	0	10	0

Agar Town.

Hughes, Miss, per W. H. Hughes, Esq.	2	10	0
Shakerley, Dow. Lady	2	0	0

Albert Street.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

Bluegate Fields.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0
Hughes, Miss, per W. H. Hughes, Esq.	5	0	0
Ripley, Miss	22	0	0
Scott, Miss	2	0	0

Charles Street, East London.

Hawkins, Miss	0	2	6
Hawkins, Miss M. A.	0	2	6

Church and Chapel Union.

Boobbyer, Miss L. L.	0	10	0
Wright, Mrs. W.	0	10	0

Church Place.

Frere, Hatley, Esq.	1	1	0

Cripples' Home.

Lister, Miss	£0	10	0
Passmore, Miss (*Boys*)	0	10	6
Do. (*Girls*)	0	10	6
Porter, Miss	1	0	0
Wright, Mrs. W.	0	10	0

Dove Row.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

Female Reformatory.

Shakerley, Dow. Lady	5	0	0

Field Lane.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0
Hill, Miss	2	0	0
Passmore, Miss	1	1	0
Ripley, Miss	0	10	0
Wright, Mrs. W.	0	10	0

Fox Court.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

George Street.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0
Frere Hartley, Esq.	1	1	0

George Yard, E.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

Grotto Passage.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

Gray's Yard.

Arbuthnott, Miss H. S.	1	1	0
Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

Hatfield Street.

Hughes, Miss, per W. H. Hughes, Esq.	2	10	0

Hinden Mews.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

Johnson's Court.

Shakerley, Dow. Lady	2	0	0

Lamb and Flag.

Glad	£0	0	6
Ling, Mr. Samuel	2	0	0
W. M. S.	0	1	0
Wright, Mrs. W.	0	10	0

Little Saffron Hill.

Craik, Miss	1	0	0
"Feed my lambs"	4	0	0
Food for hungry Little Children	1	0	0
Hughes, Miss, per W. H. Hughes, Esq.	5	0	0
Shakerley, Dow. Lady	2	0	0
Tucker, Mrs. St. George	6	0	0

New Cut.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

Ogle Mews.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0

Prince's Street.

Shakerley, Dow. Lady	2	0	0

Playhouse Yard.

Ripley, Miss	0	10	0

Shoeblacks.

Bonchier, Lady	4	0	0

St. Giles's Refuge.

"T. P." per J. MacGregor, Esq.	0	10	6

Union Walk.

Shakerley, Dow. Lady	2	0	0

York Mews.

Arden, Hon. Miss	2	0	0
Scott, Miss	2	0	0
Wright, Mrs. W.	0	10	0

Mansell Street.

Nicholls, F. M., Esq.	1	0	0

Papers, Original and Selected.

DINNERS FOR DESTITUTE CHILDREN.

SOME false prophet predicted that, after the first flush of enthusiasm had vanished, the zeal of the founders of Ragged Schools would gradually cool, and the experiment consequently die out. But, happily, after twenty-five years of hard work in the alleys and dens of our great cities, they are as vigorous as ever. Thus the number of voluntary teachers—the very glory of the system—has, within the last five years alone, increased 515; whilst, in the same period, our Sunday scholars have risen upwards of 6,000. But what most strikingly proves the *life* which is in our Mission, are the many vigorous offshoots which almost year by year spring out of the great parent tree. To God be all the glory, for the work and the machinery are his alone.

The latest of these offshoots, but which promises to be as vigorous as any, is the corporate effort now being made to provide destitute children with a substantial dinner. It is true that something was done in Ragged Schools, especially during the winter months, to this effect. Prominent among these was Gray's Yard School, which has for many years given a dinner of rice and milk to the more needy scholars. Thus, too, soup-kitchens have been opened by means of special funds in many Ragged Schools, but only in the winter months. These are all praiseworthy as *stop-gaps*, but it is obvious that something more is needed, if stunted children are to attain in maturity the full proportions of manhood.

Probably no one knows more, from long personal visitation, of the physical needs of the Ragged class than the Rev. W. W. Champneys. Now, he says:—"I have made it my business to inquire into the causes why so many poor children are in bodily growth so far below their age, and in constitutional stamina often so weak, that disease, when once it gets hold of them, so rapidly and fatally prostrates them. I am satisfied that among other causes, deficient food, and especially the want of *animal* food, tends to create this state of body. I have no doubt whatever, that

lost the services of many valuable and experienced teachers. He consequently found himself in a most trying position, being compelled to send from the doors time after time large numbers of children who came in a condition of spiritual as well as bodily destitution, and in many instances from considerable distances. To be obliged to send them empty away was a duty so painful that he earnestly prayed to be spared a continuance of it. The school was capable of accommodating upwards of three hundred children, and afforded every facility for the work, the building being comparatively new. There was also no difficulty in securing a large attendance of scholars, but owing to the scarcity of teachers, not half the proper number could be admitted. He also appealed for occasional addresses to the children or their parents from any Christian friends who could assist in that part of the work; and for bundles of old clothing for the children, and cloth-cuttings for the Mothers' Meetings.

Mr. E. J. Hytche, of the Ragged School Union, and Messrs. Short, Sapsford, and Priestley, supported this appeal by a few earnest words from their knowledge of the work and wants of the school. We are glad to report that, as a result of this meeting, eleven regular and several occasional teachers have given their services steadily.

SERMON LANE.

On December 5th the nineteenth annual meeting of this school was held. Sir Robert Carden occupied the chair.

The report stated that the admission to the Day School had been 104. Average attendance—boys, 90; girls, 50; infants and occasional attendants, 40—total, 180. During the year 22 boys and nine girls had been sent to place—six girls to flower work; one boy to an Industrial School; one boy apprenticed; 24 have been sent to national or other pay-schools; 26 have removed from the neighbourhood; one child was burnt to death. During the year the children, to the number of 230, were entertained at River Terrace Schoolroom, and through the kindness of Mrs. Jackson and other friends, each child was presented with an article of clothing. The same friends, in the summer, provided funds to enable the children to be taken for a day in the country. The Thursday Evening Class for writing has had a paid teacher appointed to it in addition to the voluntary teachers. The average attendance has been 25, and the progress made very satisfactory. The Sunday Afternoon School has had an average attendance of 80. The Evening School had an average attendance of between 50 and 60 in the summer months; in the winter months 140. The senior girls' Bible Class has been carried on very successfully, and the members evince an anxiety as to their eternal welfare. The Patching Class is in full operation, with an attendance of about 60. In connection with the Children's Provident Fund 242 articles were sold; 3 given away; 11 pairs of boots sold. The average number of children paying is 70; and the money received £8 12s. 11d. Last January Mrs. Smart kindly gave twelve flannel petticoats to twelve of the most destitute children—a most acceptable present. In the Mothers' Class the attendance has improved during the year; number on the books, 31; attendance, 18 or 20; 42 articles have been made and paid for by the members of the class; and seven patchwork quilts; £8 5s. 2½d. has been paid in by weekly instalments for clothing, and £1 13s. for coals. The Penny Bank has had 254 new accounts opened; £97 17s. 3d. paid in; £60 14s. 4d. paid out; number of deposits, 1,928. At the last meeting a debt of nearly £50 hung over the school. The Ragged School Union had offered £10 towards removing this, provided that the rest was raised by the end of the year by a special effort. The receipts during the year have been £151 3s. 9½d., and the expenses were £157 12s. 10d.

The meeting was addressed by Revs. J. Anderson, J. T. Davidson, J. C. Geikie, and J. Wilkinson; and by Messrs. Curtis, Harvey, and Matthews.

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a good meal of meat, if only once a week, would be a material help to them, and assist to form their constitutions and to prepare them as they grow up for that work which must be their maintenance."

Among the efforts in this direction those of Mr. Hicks deserves much praise. From the annual report just issued, we learn that, at his Dinner Table in Woburn Buildings, 9,524 adults and 5,296 children have been relieved by this charity during the past year, thus making a total during the five years of its establishment of 31,835 adults and 12,255 children, who have been succoured. Mr. Hicks' example has been followed by persons like-minded in different parts of the metropolis. Thus, one Table was started last year by the Rev. Mr. Kitto, Incumbent of St. Matthias, which was intended especially to provide a good dinner for those who are recovering from sickness. Mrs. Kitto pathetically pleads for assistance in this time of deep distress in the East of London. She says:—"How many little children might be saved from illness and disease, if they could only have nourishment to enable their constitutions to rally from the effects of want and semi-starvation. It is especially for these—the invalid and convalescent poor, and the starved and sickly children—that we wish to provide. The resources of this neighbourhood have been so drawn upon by the distress which has prevailed here for more than a year, that it will be only by gaining public sympathy and support that we shall be able to keep our institution open during this winter. We have accommodation sufficient to provide 500 dinners weekly at a cost of about £12. Any one sending a subscription of £1 1*s.* will know that at least forty persons have been provided with a good substantial meal." There is also an excellent Dinner Table at Lisson Grove, Paddington, where little children are fed.

But what is needed is to aggregate and to render permanent these isolated efforts; and, what is of equal importance, to render that general which is now only confined to a few destitute localities. This is now, we are glad to record, being done by the "Destitute Children's Dinner Society." The origin of this Society may be thus stated:—During the summer of the year 1866, the Countess de Noailles handed over to the Ladies' Sanitary Association the munificent sum of £500 to be expended in feeding destitute children in the poorer parts of Chelsea, the district in which the office of the Sanitary Association is situated. After many meetings, and most careful consideration of the whole subject in all its bearings, it was determined to form a Society to be called the

Destitute Children's Dinner Society, to be worked, in connection with Ragged Schools, by local committees in the various poor districts throughout London.

The Westminster Dining Room was at once opened in the building adjoining the New Tothill Street Ragged School, and fifty dinners daily have been given ever since to the destitute children of the neighbouring schools. As no child is allowed to dine more than once per week, it follows that 250 children are dined weekly. The plan has been, however, somewhat modified. Instead of giving a gratuitous dinner on alternate weeks to the children, as at first, it was resolved to enable each child to purchase, at the price of one penny, a good meat dinner one a week; the dinner to be prepared and served by elder children or monitors, who would receive their dinner gratuitously as payment for their work.

The model Dinner Tables are at the Ragged Schools in New Tothill Street, Westminster, and Turk's Row, Chelsea. Fourpence per head pays every expense, the children paying one penny of that charge.

For every fifty children there is an allowance of 25 lbs. of meat, 25 lbs. of potatoes, 2 lbs. of rice, 2 lbs. of onions, with 8 lbs. of bread. This usually affords as much food as the children can eat. The dinner is served in the form of Irish stew, for the children not only prefer hot soups to joints, but it is found more economical to supply the dinners in this form.

The objects of the promoters of this Society are thus concisely stated in a circular subscribed by Lord Shaftesbury and others:—

"We are anxious to call attention to the operations of a Society recently formed for the purpose of supplying a limited number of dinners weekly to many of the poorest children found in Ragged and other Schools throughout the metropolis. Their almost constant destitution of food is not only laying the foundation of permanent disease in their debilitated constitutions, but reduces them to so low a state that they have not vigour of body or energy of mind sufficient to derive any profit from the exertions of their teachers. Experience has proved that one substantial meat dinner per week has a marked effect on the health and powers of these children. Such a meal may be supplied with facility, and with little danger of abuse, in or near their schoolrooms, under the management of the teachers and local committees. Fifteen thousand good solid dinners have been supplied in Westminster and Chelsea by means of this Society, at a cost of fourpence per dinner

(all expenses included), of which one penny has, according to a rule of the Society, been paid by each child before obtaining a dinner ticket. These operations may easily be extended over all the very poorest and most neglected districts of the metropolis, if sufficient funds be contributed to enable us to defray the outlay necessary for cooking and serving the dinners. We earnestly request co-operation and assistance on behalf of these thousands of little children, who, by no fault of their own, are suffering the severities of hunger and destitution."

To this appeal, we are glad to say, the public have generously responded, above £1,000 having been subscribed for this purpose. As a result, the Committee are taking steps to provide children's dinners in other Ragged Schools, more especially in those eastern districts where poverty is chronic.

From personal observation, we can testify how gratefully the children of our Ragged Schools receive the meal so liberally spread at New Tothill Street and Turk's Row. Many, alas! we noticed, attacked it like famished wolves; the very eyes seeming to devour the dinner as it was ladled from the steaming coppers. "How nice!" said one half-famished girl. "Isn't this jolly?" said a gaunt-looking boy, who probably had not tasted such a dinner the whole of his life. Whilst another thus expressed his opinion of the meal so supplied in the vernacular of his class—"Hurrah! What a *tightener* I have had!"

But suppose we change this scene and go with "Censor," of the *Morning Star*, and view the dinner he was instrumental in procuring for 2,000 children during Christmas week. He thus describes the dinner given at Lambeth Baths to 220 of the juvenile waifs and strays of the New Cut:—"The cards of invitation to the dinner named the time at half-past twelve on Christmas Day; but long before the time specified a hungry and expectant crowd were besieging the doors. The monotony of waiting, however, as the time drew near, being broken by the arrival, punctually at the time stated, of dish after dish of baked meats and potatoes, comprising seven large joints of the former (150 lbs. weight), and a sack of the latter, with twenty-two plum-puddings weighing, on the average, some 8 lbs. each, ten loaves of bread, and the usual *et ceteras*. The orderly and thankful demeanour of the children was everything that could be desired. One poor little fellow said it was the first time he had ever tasted meat, and he liked the baked 'taturs' and bread, but the pudding was 'jolly.' Another poor

hungry-eyed youngster said, 'Fill my plate full, sir, please; ise so werry hungry;' while cries of 'This is prime,' sounded from all sides. One entire family of young ones were present, whose father, a Canterbury tradesman, failing to get work there, came to London, hoping for more prosperity; but he has only had ten weeks' work in fourteen months. Their gaunt appearance was, indeed, terrible. Another very clean set of little ones, belonging to a painter's widow who very seldom earns more than half-a-crown a week for the support of herself and four little ones, enjoyed the bounty provided with great gusto. Another group consisted of the children of a clerk who has been for many months unemployed, and who was seen with his wife and five children, just before Christmas, trying to make a meal out of two pounds of bread."

The great difficulty will doubtless be to confine the recipients to the right class. For any plan which degraded our artisans into an alms-taking class—be it in money or in kind—would be productive of lasting moral and social evil. Hence, with a view of "fencing" the grant in aid, the manager of the Destitute Children's Dinner Society have issued the following among other rules, namely:—

"That the locality from which the application comes be considered by the Committee, on inquiry, to be suitable to the object in view; and that the local Committee be careful that none but *really destitute* children are admitted to the dinner."

So long, however, as these dinners are confined to the scholars of Ragged and other poor free Schools, the public will have some evidence that their bounty is not wasted on a class who do not need to be fed by charity.

We think no more is required to indicate the beneficial influence, not only on the body, but on the soul, which this new movement is calculated to effect. But, whether the ultimate idea of the projectors be realised or not, and gaunt pigmy children be replaced by a well-developed race, at all events the plan only copies the practice of our Great Exemplar, who not only taught but fed. Thus, as the climax of the wondrous teachings in the wilderness, he said—"I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way." And who can tell whether by such *practical preaching* on our parts we may not unlock hearts now as hard as flint, and who, though they cannot appreciate gospel doctrine, can readily understand Christian kindness. Thus, by God's blessing, the physical will minister to the spiritual; and a work which was begun for time, will, in the sequel, be found to have been really a work for eternity.

LOVE'S LABOUR NOT LOST.

At the corner of a quiet street in the West-end district, stands a large gin-palace, the front of which had been for years the rendezvous of all the street Arabs and gutter depravity of the neighbourhood. Here they met to compare notes, share the spoil, and arrange new plans for pilfering.

A Ragged School was opened expressly for them, and endless efforts made to induce them to attend, but all to no purpose. The four master spirits of the fraternity, having graduated, from cheating at pitch and toss, to the more scientific operation of picking pockets, took the younger members into training, and by dint of practical illustrations, soon qualified them for police-courts and prisons. Grieved to the heart to see this state of things, the writer, with a view to break up this school of crime, and, if possible, get the ringleaders into a reformatory, determined to watch their proceedings.

In the street alluded to, the drovers from the cattle market are in the habit of separating from the rest of the flock the sheep intended for the several butchers in the immediate neighbourhood. The moment the drovers had disappeared with their sheep, the boys commenced operations on those they had left behind. One had scissors, another a knife, and the rest made such good use of their hands, that in an incredibly short time they were all stuffed and padded like so many pin-cushions, with the wool taken from the backs of the sheep.

Shortly after, the sheep were driven away, and a brewer's dray, drawn by three horses, stopped at the public-house. While the men were lowering the beer into the cellar, the boys proceeded to thin the manes and tails of the horses, arranging the hair so as to fit into the crown of their caps. This last proceeding they wound up by abstracting the men's dinner from a little box attached to the dray. With the dinner they decamped to an adjoining street, where I discovered them on the steps of a baker's shop, dividing the spoil.

"What have you got there?" said I.

"Our dinner, Ma'am," was the ready response.

"Where did you get it?" To this there was no reply. A look, which said plainly, "We are found out," was clearly depicted on every countenance, and one got up with the intention of running away. "Don't move," I said, "I have no intention of saying anything about what I have seen; but I have been watching you for the last hour, and I want you to tell me what you are going to do with the wool and hair you have in your jackets and caps."

This was evidently an unpleasant question: they grew very red, and very confused, and looked at each other for assistance to invent a reply, for they were afraid, if they told the truth, it might lead to unpleasant consequences. "Now, I know you every one," I continued, "and I know where you live, and I want you to tell me the truth. If you do so, no further notice will be taken of the matter." They saw it was no use to evade the question any longer, and one took upon himself the office of spokesman.

He said a man who stood near Hyde Park, selling hair watch-guards and bracelets, bought the hair, and the wool they sold at the rag-shop.

This interview gave me some influence over the lads, and I induced them to promise me that they would attend regularly one hour every day at the Ragged School. Of course they promised, and what is still more wonderful, they kept their word, and presented themselves duly the next day at the school. Though the teacher was a kind-hearted worthy woman, I had some difficulty in persuading her to have anything to do with my new friends. She had tried them before, and found them hopelessly incorrigible. I arranged to meet them every day myself, and take them entirely under my own supervision. On these grounds they were admitted, and on the old principle of "setting a thief to catch a thief," they were appointed to posts in the school. Fully subscribing to the old adage, "that cleanliness is next to godliness," and with a view of convincing the boys that we had still some faith in their honesty, we entrusted them with a shilling to get what they term a "penny crop" (*i. e.*, hair cut), and a twopenny bath.

Then we set them about cleaning the school, dividing among them the two shillings we had been in the habit of paying a woman for the like services.

Making no allusion whatever to their past lives or conduct, except in an indirect way, while illustrating the daily lessons, and treating them in every way as if we knew them to be honest, respectable boys, we gained their confidence, and in a short time our intercourse was established on a very friendly footing. After having attended regularly for a month, the boys were each presented with a neatly-bound Bible, which they prized very much. This kindly feeling displayed towards them was new, and almost incomprehensible. Hitherto they were in fact Ishmaelites, in the sense that "their hand was against every man, and every man's hand against them." Hard knocks and unkind treatment they had been used to all their lives; but this effort to draw out by the power of love the best, and purest, and kindliest part of their nature, though they could respond to it with their hearts, they could make nothing of by any process of reasoning.

As a reward for good conduct and punctual attendance, we promised that, if they came regularly to the Day and Sunday School for three months, comfortable situations would be provided for them. An understanding between the writer and parents facilitated this undertaking very much. The boys attended regularly, and with the aid of friends, good situations were secured for them. This happened in the year 1862, and we are happy to say the boys are still in the same situations. One was engaged by a printer, another by a hatter in a neighbouring street; the third is with a butcher; and the fourth went as page to a gentleman, who has been much pleased with him.

Now, had these youths been handed over to the police, though painful to contemplate, it is not difficult to imagine their history up to the present moment. Reminiscences of police-courts, reformatories, prisons, and probably penal servitude, would have formed the leading incidents; and the end —what?—we shudder to pursue the subject. But, happily, through the Divine blessing, "Love's labour" was *not* "lost."

M.

HOW A RAGGED SCHOOL COMMENCED.

The kitchen at Burton Parsonage (says the *Christian Treasury*) excelled all the kitchens I ever saw. It was a delightful place. Mrs. Grayson belonged to the old school. Dignified she always was; but there was also a spice of stateliness in her manner, which effectually checked any undue familiarity. No doubt you will think she pushed her domestic notions too far. "Her husband" might be "known in the gate" from the whiteness of his linen. Yet she did not put all her energies of body and mind into the starching of linen and the making of pies, though she was busy enough with the latter one Saturday morning.

"Holloa, missus! doa yo want ony tins?"

"Dear me, child, how you startled me! You should *knock* at the door, and ask nicely, and then, perhaps, you would sell more tins. Now you must go out, and I will shut the door, and you must knock—so; then, when I open the door, you must say, *If you please*, do you want anything to-day?"

The child thus addressed was quite a little boy, not more than six or seven years of age. His clothing was scanty and ragged, and his hands and face were not scrupulously clean. He wore no hat, and his little head seemed a perfect mop of tangled curls, which lay on his shoulders when he lifted up to Mrs. Grayson's gaze those wonderful, confiding, childish blue eyes of his. He was so long in knocking, that Mrs. Grayson began to fear he had run away. Presently the silence was broken by a timid rat-tat, upon which the door was immediately opened.

"Please, missus, doa yo want anything in my way, think yo?"

Mrs. Grayson was so amused with his quaint, old-fashioned manner, as not to be able to reply directly. He eagerly continued—

"They's vary good uns, missus; real strong. These skewers, now, is real good skewers, and vary cheap: look at 'em!"

"Well, I think I must take these. How much do you ask for them?"

"Thrippence, missus; I can't take no less than that. I only gets a halfpenny for every bunch I sells."

Whilst Mrs. Grayson was feeling in her pocket for coppers, she asked—

"What is your name? and where do you live?"

"Johnny, missus; and we live nowheres; we're on tramp."

"Did you ever go to Sunday School?"

"Noa: what is't?"

"It is where kind people teach little boys and girls to read God's book—the Bible, you know—and where they are taught about God."

"Whose him, missus?"

"Did you never hear about God, Johnny?"

"Not as I knows on."

A look of sad yearning stole over Mrs. Grayson's countenance. The snowdrops had only twice bloomed above the little grave where her only son was buried. As she gazed at this little neglected boy, she pictured that other bright-haired, blue-eyed child, who had so early learned to lisp "Our Father" with loving confidence. A thought entered her mind; and, being an impulsive woman, she acted upon it.

"Have you any mother, Johnny?"

"Yes, and a little sister—littler than me."

"Well, now, to-morrow will be Sabbath. You ask mother to wash you well, and send you to me. You can come in the morning, about nine o'clock. We go to church at eleven; so, if you do not come early, you must wait till afternoon. Do you hear?"

"Yes, missus; I'll be sure and come."

Mrs. Grayson went to a little room, and, shutting the door, unlocked a box, which contained many precious mementoes of her lost darling. She selected socks and shoes, a holland blouse and belt, and a child's linen collar.

Sabbath morning came, but no Johnny. About three in the afternoon, when the servants had gone out, and the house was still, Mrs. Grayson spied her *protégé* creeping shyly along by the garden wall, as if half ashamed of being seen. She went into the kitchen and opened the door for him.

"Well, Johnny, there's a good boy! What a nice clean face! Now, I'm going to make make you a tidy little boy whilst you stay with me."

She then proceeded to invest him with socks and shoes, blouse and collar, talking to him the while. She found he had not come in the morning because his mother would not get up to wash him, or give him any breakfast. At length, in despair, he had gone to a good-natured neighbour, who had scrubbed him well all over.

"And did Mrs. Jones give you any breakfast?"

"No."

"Have you had *anything* to eat to-day, Johnny?"

"No, missus. Mother was a getting of it ready when I came off; but I was feared you'd think I wasn't coming."

On learning this, Mrs. Grayson brought him a large cup of milk and some bread. It made the tears come into her eyes to see how eagerly he ate it. He broke the bread in two pieces, and was putting one part into his ragged little pocket, when Mrs. Grayson asked—

"Why do you do that?"

"Oh, missus, its for Lizzie; it's so good!"

"Eat all you want, my dear," replied Mrs. Grayson, "and I will give you some to take for Lizzie."

When the meal was concluded, Mrs. Grayson felt some difficulty in commencing. She wished to offer prayer, but felt she must first explain who the Great Being was whose blessing they were about to ask. She began by asking Johnny if he liked flowers, and birds, and butterflies, and if he had ever seen the stars shining at night; and having interested him, she told him that God in heaven made them, and took care of them, and loved them; and that he loved Johnny, and wanted him to be a good boy, and love him, and his dear son Jesus Christ, for whose sake God was willing to forgive her and him everything they had ever done that was naughty; only they must try and not vex him any more. She told him of God's presence; that his eye was on him then; and he could hear all she was saying to him.

"Can he see us now, missus?"

"Yes; he is everywhere."

"Is he in this room?"

Yes."

"Is he in yon?" (pointing to a door that led into the scullery.)

'Yes."

Sinking his voice to a whisper, he asked—

"May I go in and look?"

"Yes, you may go in; but you cannot see him, though he can see you."

Cautiously advancing on tiptoe, he peered into the scullery, and returned uite mystified to his teacher, saying—

"Tell him to give o'er looking at me; I'd as lief he didn't!"

"But he is your friend, and loves you, and he wants to do you good; and how can he, if he doesn't look at you to see what you need?"

"Wab'but I cannot see him," said Johnny, going back to the old difficulty.

"You cannot see God, Johnny, until you die. Can you tell me what it is that moves that large tree in the garden?"

"Why, the wind, to be sure; it very nigh blowed me over as I was coming!"

"Can you *see* the wind, Johnny?"

"Noa; but I can feel it, though."

"Well, God is like the wind. You cannot *see* him, but you can learn to *feel* his presence, and rejoice in it."

And so the lesson went on; and, at its close, Mrs. Grayson knelt in prayer, and Johnny, for the first time in his young life, bent his knee to him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

The lesson being over, Mrs. Grayson proceeded to divest her pupil of his blouse and collar, telling him she would keep them for him till next Sabbath, if he would come again. She hardly liked to take off the socks and shoes, and send him out, in the keen March wind, with his little naked feet. Seeing her about to leave them on, Johnny said—

"Nay, you'd best take 'em off, missus; they'll very like go to 'pop' [the pawnbroker's] if you don't."

Mrs. Grayson thought so too; so off they came, and Johnny was soon trotting home,—made happy with a large piece of cake for himself, and another for "Lizzie." Week after week passed, each Sabbath found Johnny and Mrs. Grayson in the kitchen, reading and talking of Him who careth for the falling sparrow: how much more, then, for "one of these little ones"?

At length, towards the close of July, the child called to say "Good-bye." Teacher and scholar were sorry to part; but Mrs. Grayson was not surprised. Indeed, she rather wondered the family had remained so long in the place.

"I'm very much obliged to you for teaching me. If ever we come here again, I'll be sure to come and see you; and I'll not forget what you've said to me."

And as he turned away, the sweet eyes looked wistfully back, and each saw the other through tears. And so Johnny turned sadly into the hot July sunshine; but, you may depend upon it, he did not forget the lady at Burton Parsonage.

Again weeks passed away. The dismal rains and sullen fogs of November had set in. Mrs. Grayson had been nodding for some time, as she sat by the drawing-room fire with a book in her hands which she believed she was read-

ing. She was thoroughly aroused by the sudden entrance of her daughter, who exclaimed—

"Mamma, here's Johnny; and he's brought six more boys with him!"

It was quite true. When Mrs. Grayson reached the kitchen, there stood Johnny, with a face all smiles, and behind him *half a dozen* other lads, all bigger than himself, exhibiting different degrees of sheepishness, and all more or less astonished at their leader's daring in putting out his hand to shake hands with "the lady." With the exception of Johnny, none of them were very clean; and all were ragged, stockingless, and shoeless.

"Yo see I've comed back, missus, and I've brought these here six others. I thought, may-be, yo'd like to teach them what yo've taught me."

"I am pleased to see you again, Johnny; and I shall be very glad to teach your friends, if they are willing to learn."

Mrs. Grayson had a peculiar gift for dealing with children; and she soon had, in these little roughs, a most attentive class. After their departure, she thought long and prayerfully. Burton was a densely-populated manufacturing town. There were hundreds of ragged, neglected children swarming its streets. Sabbath Schools there were in abundance, but none for such wretched little outcasts as these. Thought led to earnest effort; and, before the first snow covered the tombstones in Burton churchyard, a room had been taken and fitted up, and a "Ragged School" formed, of which Johnny and his six friends were the first scholars.

It is nineteen years ago, but the school still flourishes. It seldom numbers fewer than 200 in attendance; but it will not be till the last great day that the good accomplished can be fully estimated. Who will not be encouraged to "sow by all waters"? Who will withhold the scattering hand in the morning, or restrain it in the evening, seeing we know not which shall prosper, this or that, or whether God will will make "both alike good"?

SINGAPORE RAGGED SCHOOL.

BY MISS COOKE.

Our little Ragged School in Singapore goes on as usual. The truth there taught is evidently sinking deep into some hearts, and two children are really bearing unkind treatment from their friends because they love the Saviour. One has been taken from the school, and is only allowed to learn Chinese from a heathen; but he manages to come to our little school at the time for Scripture and prayer; and the other day he told Miss Houston that he believed that his learning Chinese was God's doing, so that he might become a missionary to his countrymen. Twenty-nine only are on the books now, and twenty-one to twenty-three attend regularly; but more than 150 have passed through the school, each one having remained long enough to have heard of the Saviour's love.

I have just received most cheering and kind letters from some dear friends, expressing their pleasure at the last account I was able to give of the Girls' Home belonging to this little mission. I am glad to rejoice the hearts of my fellow-labourers once again; for though I have no baptisms to tell of, and no par-

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ticular incidents to relate, I can truly say that I believe the Lord is with us blessing and prospering our work. Since the Chinese new year our numbers have increased, so that our house is now quite full; forty are with us, and two more are expected; then it will be hard work to refuse others, but we have no more sleeping room, and we are not rich, so I cannot make any addition to our house. Amongst our girls who are not yet baptized I believe there are several true Christians, who are prevented from confessing their Saviour openly through fear of their heathen parents; so we must wait and pray till the Lord may see fit to make his strength perfect in their weakness.

G——, who was brought from a place of sin and misery to this school by the police, wishes to be baptized; and though it may be well to wait a little, we have every reason to hope that God has changed her heart. Our friends will be glad to hear that H——'s daughter, fourteen years of age, is with us; I believe a good work is going on in her heart, but there is a depression about her and shyness of manner which, I think, arises from her knowledge of her mother's sin.

The eldest two of our scholars, J—— and C——n, now sixteen and fourteen years of age, have given such decided proofs of their love for the Lord Jesus, that they, with C——o, have been admitted to the table of the Lord. K—— has been much stronger lately, and is as diligent as ever in all her duties, shining brightly as a Christian.

J——w and K——w are following her good example. Our three district visitors, Loan, Anleang, and Kay Chae, are as earnest as ever in their work, so that our lepers are visited monthly, as well as girls who have left the school. Ch——, who cheered the dying moments of little Lalla, has been removed from school by her heathen mother, and I fear has returned for a time to heathenism. But I trust we shall yet rejoice over her, for I can but believe that the Lord had begun his work in her heart.

SENTIMENTAL PHILANTHROPY.

They told me one day that a little deformed boy was coming to make a visit in the house where I was stopping. He had "always been more or less an invalid," was very affectionate, and loved dearly to read. At once I pictured to myself this child—he was eleven years old—as fragile, fair-haired, and pale-faced, with blue eyes, and a soft, quiet voice. I began to lay philanthropic plans. I would read and play to him. We would have pleasant talks which should tend to edification. When he was able we would explore the woods together. And so, altogether, I waited his arrival with not a little interest.

Entering my room one day after a walk, I heard a tramp through the hall below to the tune "Yankee Doodle." I looked over the banister, and could not mistake the boy. Well, whistling in the house was not a promising beginning, I was forced to grant. I met him in the doorway very soon after. He appeared stout and hardy—I knew afterwards it was only in the seeming—was short, with gray eyes, black hair, and dark complexion. He wore boots, and had a patronising air withal.

"This is Ralph, I suppose," said I; "we must be friends, as you are to make a good long visit."

"It is very uncertain how long we stay," was his only answer. Somewhat ungracious, thought I.

"You love to read, Aunt Laura says."

"I like stories tolerably well."

Then he fell to whistling again. That was one of his solaces. I heard him at it everywhere, out of doors and in. I do not think his mother had the heart to stop him. "Shall I read to you?" I asked one day.

"No, thank you; I'm going tadpoling with the boys!"

The indifference with which my overtures of patronage were met was humiliating. He was fond of music, and sometimes when I turned suddenly in the midst of my piece, I saw him stretched full length on the floor, one hand supporting his head, a rapt listener. If I spoke, he made some dry remark, and soon disappeared, and I heard him whistling in the garden. I found him often in this prone position, reading, his head thrown back far enough to preserve a comfortable distance between his eyes and the book. He had a capital appetite and a strong will; and, strange to say, appeared quite as often with dirty hands and tumbled hair as "any other child."

My fancies died out. I gave up my plans. The boy was an actual piece of humanity, and for that my sentimentality was wholly unprepared.

Yet his mother knew better than we how often he came in wearily from his play; how, now and then, a sudden consciousness of *the difference* filled him with pain. She knew better than we the depth of his feelings; the manliness that kept from notice the fact that often it required an effort to be cheerful and brave. Spite of the whistling and the boots, there was even more in the boy than I had fancied, though it was expressed in a different way. There was much that might have been done towards smoothing his pathway, though it would have required a different spirit.

So fancifully we mark out our missionary work, the helpful labours of every-day life. Without caution, we run into a style of expectation and purpose not exactly suited to this very human, work-a-day world. There may be an Irish colony near, and we get very pretty notions of the delight to be found in assisting some family, or giving pleasure to the children. Distributing dolls we think agreeable recreation; but when it comes to finding that the hood and wristers we could scarcely spare were exchanged for gin; when the frock and coat, instead of working the transformation into neat, bright-eyed children, that we fondly expected, are characteristically converted at once, the one by a grinding application to mother earth, the other by catching the sleeve on a nail; when we find the girl we thought had been trained in our household to an abhorrence of dirt, living in its midst from choice, why then we begin to think that missionary labours are on the whole disagreeable and thankless. We find real life different from the expectations formed, and we are disgusted at once. The poetry is knocked out of our plans, and we have not courage to carry through the prose.

The romance of life bears a very small ratio to the common, matter-of-fact events that make up the bulk of men's actual experiences. The rich bear a small proportion to the poor; the learned to the unlearned. There is nothing which better fits one to become an efficient worker in the world than a hearty

willingness to take people as we find them, remembering that the *soul* is priceless, under whatever wrappers hidden.

When we take hold of work with whole hands, and not with dainty fingers, we shall begin to be indeed "helpers." Going to men as they are, ourselves thoroughly in earnest in the desire to elevate and cheer, we shall labour with a heartiness and *whole-souledness* that shall not fail of accomplishing great things. A. A.

CHRISTMAS WITH VICTOR HUGO.

On the 26th of December M. Victor Hugo, the father of the children's dinner movement, gave the sixth yearly *fête* to forty poor children at Hauteville House, Guernsey, a large number of ladies and gentlemen being present. The *fête* consisted of three parts:—First, the luncheon; second, the poet's oration and the presentation of garments; third, the distribution of articles from the Christmas-tree. During the first part, shortly after twelve, the poet entered the room, greatly applauded by the company, the children and the visitors having already commenced partaking of refreshments, the same quality being offered to all, without distinction of rank. The party then passed into another room, where Victor Hugo delivered a speech, of which the following is a summary:—

He said that he had been requested to repeat the explanations he had often given on the subject of his weekly dinner, and, as the end he had in view was to be useful, he would rapidly go over the same ground. Scientific men tell us that poor children require proper nourishment at least once a month, without which their health would be sure to suffer. It was for the interest of the future that children should be loved by the rich. In order to have a fair future, it was necessary, God helping, now to set a good example. He indicated a simple means to arrive at that end. He had established a dinner for forty poor children, divided into two bands of twenty, which dine alternately. In order to be invited to dinner poverty was the only requisite; no distinctions between creeds or nationalities were made; Roman Catholics, Protestants, French, and English were alike welcome. This little institution, established in his house, had been brought under the notice of continental readers, for almost all the European newspapers had republished the reports of the Christmas *fêtes*. He had two objects in view:—First, to show that the hygiene which he carried out was a success; and secondly, to spread the knowledge of the reasons why he gave the dinners. If it were only forty children who were fed, the matter would be most insignificant; but it was important that the example he had set should be extensively followed. He had received the day before the *Leith Pilot*, which recommended strongly the formation of similar institutions; and on last year's *fête*-day he had read a letter which had appeared in the *Times*, stating that, in imitation of the children's dinner at Guernsey, the Rev. Mr. Wood has established for poor children in London a dinner, at which three hundred and twenty were fed; thus the forty had increased to three hundred and twenty. This year Lady Thompson, treasurer of the children's dinner, Marylebone, had sent him a letter, published in the Guernsey papers, which the speaker noticed. It

stated that six thousand children had dined during the few months of its establishment. First, then, there were the forty; afterwards the three hundred and twenty; and now the six thousand: thus the little stream of Guernsey had become a large river in London. He begged now to thank Lady Thompson and her colleagues for their endeavours. (Cheers.) Addressing himself to the ladies, he asked them to think of their children whilst beholding the poor ones present; and requested them, who were happy and favoured mothers, so to inculcate from childhood the fraternity of men, that the little rich should not be envied by the little poor. Let us sow the seeds of love; thus we shall appease the future. He wished that the children should have one day of joy out of the year of misery. To-day they had had a luncheon, and new clothes were about to be distributed to them, and in the third place, they would share the joys of a Christmas-tree. (Cheers.) Every one of us, said M. Hugo, has here below duties of different sorts to perform. God imposes on us, in the first instance, serious duties. We must struggle in the interest of all men; we must combat against the strong and the powerful—against the strong when they abuse their strength, and against the powerful when they badly employ their power; we must take by the collar the despot, whoever he be, from the carter who ill-treats a horse, to the king who oppresses a people. To be successful and to struggle are rude necessities; life would be hard if it only consisted of that. Sometimes, after useless endeavours, we ask respite from duty; we drag ourselves into the presence of conscience, and conscience replies that we must continue in duty. The struggle, however, is interrupted, to contemplate these poor little ones, whose fresh-coloured faces are both lighted and rosy by the splendid dawn of life. We feel moved; we pass from indignation to tenderness, and we understand the aim of life. Thus we thank God, who, though giving us to combat the powerful and the wicked, gives us yet to succour the innocent and the feeble—and who, side by side with the grave duties of life, has placed the cheerful ones—the latter to uphold the former.

At the conclusion of the speech, garments were distributed to the children: then the company passed into the "tapestried room," where M. Hugo superintended the presentation of the numerous articles which were on the Christmas-tree; after which he presented some pieces of music to several of the ladies as a souvenir of the *fête*. The *fête* ended shortly before two p.m. From two to three hundred visitors were present.

Poet's Corner.

BRINGING OUR SHEAVES TO JESUS.

BY ELIZABETH AKERS.

THE time for toil has past, and night has come—
The last and saddest of the harvest eves;
Worn out with labour long and wearisome,
Drooping and faint, the reapers hasten home,
Each laden with his sheaves.

Last of the labourers, thy feet I gain,
Lord of the harvest! and my spirit grieves
That I am burdened not so much with grain
As with a heaviness of heart and brain—
Master, behold my sheaves!

Few, light, and worthless—yet their trifling weight
Through all my frame a weary aching leaves;
For long I struggled with my hapless fate,
And stayed and toiled till it was dark and late—
Yet these are *all* my sheaves.

Full well I know I have more tares than wheat—
Brambles and flowers, dry stalks, and withered leaves:
Wherefore I blush and weep, as at thy feet
I kneel down reverently and repeat,
"Master, behold my sheaves!"

I know these blossoms, clustering heavily
With evening dew upon their folded leaves,
Can claim no value nor utility—
Therefore shall fragrancy and beauty be
The glory of *my* sheaves.

So do I gather strength and hope anew;
For well I know thy patient love perceives
Not what I did, but what I strove to do—
And though the full ripe ears be sadly few,
Thou wilt accept my sheaves!

Teachers' Column.

HOW TO TEACH GOOD MANNERS.

AMONG the majority of children, says *The Museum*, attending elementary schools, there is little regard or consideration paid to "the feelings," even in cases where substantial kindness is ungrudgingly conferred. There is, in consequence, a perceptible degree of blinded feeling very much to be deprecated. "You're a liar," is considered to be satisfactorily settled by "You're another;" and "You stole a pear" as comfortably compromised by "So did you." Even when retaliation cannot so readily make amends for wounded feelings, a disagreeable nickname, or an unpleasant reminder, will unhesitatingly be hurled by a boy who would the next moment share his worldly goods with the object of his insult.

It is abundantly evident, that our good intentions must be directed by influences not necessarily co-existent with them, to be uniformly productive of pleasure or happiness to others. The question then arises, What are those influences, and how may they most successfully be fostered in the young?

The first lesson to be taught is, the necessity of endeavouring to increase the happiness of those around us. This, however, like most other tasks that devolve on the teacher, is not to be effected by a few exhortations, however

appropriate: it demands the systematic subjection of the mind to suitable influences. It is only gradually that the mind can assimilate ideas with which it has not been familiar; and the difficulty of effecting mental changes is naturally proportioned to the nature and extent of the home-influences. When these are good, the teacher's work is simple and easy; when they are bad, progress is, at best, but slow and uncertain. It would, indeed, be wonderful if the children of parents who rarely address them without an oath, and who at all times bestow more blows upon them than caresses, should manifest great aptitude for æsthetic culture, least of all for that of manners.

Living in an atmosphere of sinister influences, their minds are necessarily permeated with a poison, which may be eliminated in small daily doses under the regimen of the teacher, but which the home-influence will to some extent as regularly restore. In fact, the process of transforming the hapless victim of degrading circumstances is, at best, but "going up two steps — coming down one;" and the teacher who is not content patiently to await the result of this peculiar mode of progress, but attempts to reach the top of the ladder at a bound, is certain to be disappointed.

Children of this class are so habituated to their own peculiar mode of expression and of action, that it is difficult to convince them of the abnormal character of their habits, or of the possibility of their being obnoxious to others. Indeed, they seem to be almost unconscious of some of their most inveterate practices—a blindness by no means exclusively confined to the young.

There is no child, however unfavourable the circumstances of his home, whose better feelings cannot be reached through some avenue, or to whom the only ill of life is physical discomfort. All are more or less liable to mental pain. The most callous and indifferent have sensitive points, which others, equally callous and indifferent, would consider it an unworthy weakness to exempt from torture. In short, it is certain that no child is wholly ignorant of the pain that may be inflicted by an ill-natured or thoughtless observation. The idea of mental discomfort is, therefore, not new to the youngest child, and only requires to be developed by the teacher's skill. The points on which a boy is liable to be sensitive may be few, but the fact that he is at all capable of recognising the existence of sources of mental pain, on which others may operate at pleasure, must prepare him for apprehending the possibility of a larger catalogue of assailable points than his own experience may suggest. He is thus in a fair way for being moulded by the judicious teacher, who will be careful to regulate his intercourse with his pupils by as much courtesy and politeness as may be consistent with the due exercise of discipline.

It is much to be regretted that many teachers practically forget their duty in this respect. A practice, formerly very common, and even now more prevalent than polite, was to address the most offensive epithets to their pupils. "Blockhead," "dunce," "goose," were the stock compliments of the school, and great occasions were marked by correspondingly significant additions to the complimentary titles. "You are the biggest dunce that ever lived," and "You stupid fool," are forms of expression better calculated to expose the teacher's inability to instruct, than to demonstrate the child's stupidity, or teach him good manners. Nothing can be less in harmony with the proper objects of a well-regulated school, than the use of such language. It familiarizes the children with habits repugnant to politeness; it blunts their feelings, and thereby incapacitates them from sympathizing with the feelings of others; in a word, it trains them into a use of language forbidden in good society, and disagreeable to any society.

Most schools furnish special evidence of the teacher's example, and in nothing more than in personal habits. It is surely, then, incumbent on those who

aim at imparting the best impressions to the young, constantly to guard against those peculiarities which men sometimes so unconsciously display, and which may prove so detrimental to the plastic minds of children. The teacher should never sink the gentleman in the pedagogue, any more than the pedagogue in the gentleman. Both characters are essential to the perfection of his art, and those who, on the one hand, sink to the level of their pupils, or, on the other hand, assume an air of unapproachable refinement, are equally censurable. A judicious medium must be struck, so that the children may be encouraged to look upwards, without being chilled by fashionable frigidity.

OBSERVING CHILDREN.

ONE qualification desirable in a teacher, is the habit of observing children as they are moving, talking, playing around us. A zealous botanist sees every plant, although he may pass a friend without recognition. A true sailor examines every ship within reach of his eye. Every one is quick to perceive and anxious to study whatever gratifies his ruling taste, or can be made to promote his favourite pursuit. Should it not be so with the Ragged School teacher?

As he is to labour for the young, let him omit no opportunity to watch and study the young.

He needs to know their thoughts and feelings, and how they are wont to manifest them. He needs to know their dialect, and the kind of language which they most readily understand and feel. This he can do, in part, by returning, in memory, to his own early days, and reproducing the consciousness of that season, and in part, by observing those who are just commencing the career of life. He must become again as a little child, think, act, and talk, in a measure, as a little child. To be a wise and successful teacher, as well as to enter the kingdom of heaven, it is necessary to become as a little child.

Children's Gallery.

WORTH OF A CRUST.

WHAT is the use of a crust of bread? Some people never think of saving it. I know children who leave their bread and butter half eaten, and waste many a good crust, without thinking anything about it. Shall I tell you of a man who did a great deal of good with crusts of bread; yes, and grew rich by them?

A poor soldier in the city of Paris was in quest of something to do. "How can I earn an honest living?" he asked once and again. Standing one day in the shop of a rag-merchant, seeing the rag-pickers come in, he saw they had a great many pieces of old bread in their bags, which they were very careful of.

"What are you going to do with it?" asked the soldier.

"We sell it to feed rabbits and chickens with," they said.

A bright idea struck Chepellier, for that was his name. "I will do in a large way what these beggars do in a small way," he said; and directly he hired a room, with a shed near it for a cart and donkey. He then went round to the houses and cook-shops, and offered to buy all the waste bread which they had been in the habit of throwing away or giving to the beggars.

As soon as Chepellier had enough, he appeared one morning in one of the great markets loaded down with bags, and round his hat in large letters was a placard, "Bread-crusts for sale." His bread was for the rabbits, dogs, birds, or fowl which people keep for pets. He sold it for threepence a basketful, enough

to keep a little animal a week. Chepellier son had plenty of custom, so that at the end of four months, instead of one cart and a donkey, he had work for three carts and horses. Nor was it long before he made money enough to buy a little farm, and there he went to live. But farming did not suit him, and after a time he left the country for the city again.

What next? Let me see. In France there is a great sale of bread crumbs for soups and fries. Chepellier hankered after his old business, or something like it; so he sent out and bought up the waste bread as before. He built great ovens too, which they say are never cold. In time his warehouses covered a great deal of ground; and I will tell you what takes place there. At one end the waggons come in loaded with crusts and other pieces of waste bread. In the next room they are sorted; for crusts are of two kinds, the good and—not bad—but the poorer sort. These are put away to feed rabbits and birds with. The good ones are cut in little squares and baked over in the big ovens. The best of these little squares are for soups, while the brownest are pounded and sifted, to be used in frying. But sometimes the ovens are too hot, and the bread gets burnt. Is it then thrown away? The careful, saving Chepellier throws nothing away. He employs children to rasp off the black burnt part, which is powdered and sifted, put into little boxes, and sold for tooth powder.

In another part of the building this once despised bread is put up into nice paper bags, and carts are ready to carry it to the soup-houses and cook-shops of the city.

Throughout this establishment there is the greatest order and neatness, for the master is always present, and his eye does more work than both his hands. He does not find much fault, to be sure; but if anybody is idle, wasteful, or careless, he pretty soon finds out that that is no place for him.

Though Chepellier was born so poor that none could well be poorer, he has done more good than many who enjoy a fortune as soon as they are born. He has not only grown very rich, but by his means thousands of people are fed on wholesome food at the cheapest rate, and hundreds of men, women, and children are put in the way of earning an honest living, and that too by gathering up what others throw away. Besides all this, he gives a great deal in charity every year.

So, you see, by exercising the faculties which God has given us, nobody is so poor or so humble but the world can be made better by their living in it.

THE LITTLE ORPHAN.

One morning a lady, who lived in a large town, was going out rather earlier than usual. On opening the door there sat, or rather lay, on the steps, a poor little girl, who was crying and sobbing as if her heart would break. She took no notice when the lady first spoke to her, but sobbed out, "Oh, mother, mother, come back, come back!"

The lady took hold of her poor thin hand, and said, "Tell me, little girl, what is the matter. Has your mother gone off and left you? She must be a bad, cruel mother to do that."

The little girl started to her feet, and shook back her hair, and looked in the lady's face with a pair of honest blue eyes, and said, "No, lady, no; mother was not bad or cruel."

"Then why did she leave you, and where has she gone?"

"She has gone to heaven because God so loved her. He has taken her to himself; but, oh!" with another burst of crying, "I wish, I wish she had taken me with her!"

"So, my poor little girl your mother is dead?"

"Oh no, no, mother is *no* dead; for she told me she was going to heaven to *live* with God, and mother would not tell a *lie*."

"Was your mother long ill before she went away?"

"Oh yes, mother was very bad a long,

long time, and grew so white and thin; but she smiled so sweetly, and said she was happy to go, only she did not like to leave me. And oh! what shall I do? why *did* mother go?"

"But, my little girl, don't you think it would grieve your mother if she could see you thus? and would you wish to bring her back to a bed of pain, when she told you she would be happy to go, and you know 'mother would not tell a lie?' But tell me what she said to you before she went away."

"She kissed me, and said I must pray to God to give me a new heart, and pardon my sins for the sake of his dear Son Jesus Christ."

"And what did she mean about Jesus?"

"Mother said, God was angry with us for being naughty; and Jesus said, *I* will *die* instead of all these bad people, and if they will love me for doing that, I will take them to heaven, and make them good. But I don't love Jesus enough, and that is why I can't get to heaven beside mother."

"But were you to try and do what mother told you; and if you ask God, He will give you a heart to love Jesus; and then, in God's good time, you will go to heaven and see your mother. But tell me, did your mother say anything more to you before she left you?"

"Yes, mother said a great deal I can't remember; but I know she said that she prayed to God to put it into the heart of somebody to be kind to her poor orphan, and she was sure he would." And then the little girl gave a start, and looking eagerly into the lady's face, cried, "Oh, tell me, lady, did God send you?"

And the lady said, "I think God did; and I shall clothe you and feed you for the sake of Jesus, who said, 'Inasmuch as ye do it to one of these little ones, ye do it to me.'"—*Children's Hour.*

Editor's Note-book.

PERSONAL SERVICE.

PERSONAL SERVICE is called for. Christian men and women should not attempt to transfer their individual responsibility to the shoulders of the Ragged School Union or any other society. Many give a few pounds, and there end; they think they have done all required of them. But the legal maxim that he who does a thing through another does it himself, is no rule of Christian conduct. Christ's command is, "Give *ye* them to eat." He gave to *his disciples*, and the disciples to the multitude. "Go *ye* into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The Christian Church has a new reading of that passage, and renders it, "Send missionaries." Many people stay in their comfortable dwellings, and put up devout petitions for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the masses. But Christ's words are, "I send the promise of my Father unto *you*;" "Go *ye* and preach."

LITTLES.

DR. JOHNSON wisely said, "He who waits to do a great deal of good at once, will never do anything." Life is made up of little things. It is but once in an age that occasion is offered for doing a good deal. True greatness consists in being great in little things. How are railroads built? By one shovel of dirt after another; one shovel at a time. Hence we should be willing to do a little good at a time, and never "wait to do a great deal of good at once."

If we would do much good in the world, we must be willing to do good in little things, little acts one after another;

speaking a word here, giving a tract there, and setting a good example all the time. We must do the first thing we can, and the next, and then the next, and so keep on doing good. This is the way to accomplish anything. Thus only shall we do all the good in our power.

POWER IN CHRISTIAN WORK.

If we would work *successfully* for God, we must have "power," and we cannot have this spiritual power, without much prayer. We must also be especially careful that we do not allow anything which we know to be hateful to the Lord. Thus shall we be vessels meet for the Master's use; but thus alone have we any right to expect to be used by the Lord. The office of an apostle we never can have; but this spiritual state of the heart which the apostles had *we* may have—yes, ought to have. And just in the degree in which we have it, will the Gospel which we preach come in power and in the Holy Ghost.

It is not the much we do, the number of visits we have made, or the number of children we teach: it is not the *quantity* but the *quality* of our service which we should regard. If we have taught a large number of children, how much have we taught them in prayer, and how much have we followed them in prayer?

REWARDS ONLY OF GRACE.

Some persons, says Archbishop Whately, have fallen into perplexity and mistake on the subject of the rewards promised in Scripture and the merit which some suppose good works to possess in God's sight.

An illustration from the case of a school will serve to explain it. Suppose, for instance, some rich and liberal man should found a school for the children of his poor neighbours, and suppose that, besides building a school-house, and providing teachers and school-books, he should also provide prizes for such of the scholars as should behave well, and make good proficiency in their learning. Every one would understand that the children and their parents ought to be very grateful to such a patron for his kind bounty. And the children would easily be made to understand that they ought to show their thankfulness by taking pains to profit by the advantages afforded them. And when it was said that these prizes were to be the reward of good behaviour, no one would be so stupid as to think that those who gained them could claim them as something *earned* by themselves, as a matter of right, and for which they owed no thanks to anyone. All would understand that the *proposing* of the prizes was from the free bounty of their kind patron; and that the proficiency in learning of the children thus rewarded was no benefit to *him*, but only to them; and that it was entirely for *their* sakes that they were encouraged to take pains in learning. But they would fully calculate on receiving the promised rewards in case of good conduct; though not as what they had originally any claim to, but *because* it had been *promised*. For though the offer of the prize came from the patron's free bounty, the *fulfilment* of a promise once made is a matter of justice.

And accordingly we read that God is not unrighteous (unjust) to forget our work or labour of love; not that he was originally bound in justice to reward any good works of ours, or that they can be a benefit to him; but because he has graciously promised to be a "rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The *offer* of a reward to any of his creatures is a free *gift* of his bounty; but we may trust to his justice to make good what he has said.

If you could imagine the patron of a school such as we have been describing, to have supplied to the children not only a school-room, and teachers, and books, but also the eyes with which they read the books, and the ears with which they hear what is said to them, and the brain by which they understand it, then the case would answer more closely to that of ourselves in reference to our Maker, "in whom we live and move, and have our being."

Correspondence.

UNKNOWN FRUIT REVEALED.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—Ragged School teachers often grieve over the little spiritual fruit they see of their labours. Though few earnest workers are left without some visible fruitage, yet it is probable that they will never know the fulness of their harvest until sower and reaper meet in glory. Sometimes, however, the harvest is reaped here in most unexpected quarters; and thus, when the Christian labourer is saying, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" that is the very spot where the Holy Spirit deigns to crown his labour.

The Rev. Robert Robinson lately narrated a case to this effect. He says that—"I went to visit a female teacher in dying circumstances. I sat by the side of that teacher, and received from her a confession of her strong faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I heard her express the joy she had felt in the Lord's service. As I was thus talking with her, I observed that a young lady was sitting near the couch and looking with considerable interest on the invalid. I made inquiry respecting her, and found that she had once been a scholar in the dying teacher's class, that she had come up from the country to visit her old friend, and finding her so weak, and in dying circumstances, had resolved not to leave her till her Lord called her away. 'Oh,' said the teacher, speaking in an undertone, for her strength was fast failing—'oh, if I could but know of her decision for Christ! I feel as if I should then pass away with a happiness indescribable.'

"I looked at the young person at the end of the couch, and finding that she did not hear what was said, I repeated to her her teacher's words. She looked up with astonishment, and then with deep emotion she approached the bed, and said, 'Dear, dear teacher, I have joined the Church these three years, and have given my heart to the Saviour.' You should have seen the celestial smile that came over the face of her teacher when she heard the glad news. She said, 'Why did you not tell me of it before? I have been thinking about you. I have been praying for you, and longing to hear this concerning you. Now I shall go to heaven feeling that I have something in addition to thank my loving Father for.'"

I trust that this instance of fruit graciously revealed to cheer a dying teacher will stimulate any Ragged School teachers who are saying—"Who hath believed our report?" to more vigorous labour. For, happily, the divine promise has not yet been, and never will be, repealed, "As ye sow, so *shall* ye reap."

Yours, &c.,

Quartus.

Notices of Meetings.

COPENHAGEN STREET.

THE eleventh anniversary of this institution was recently held at Myddleton Hall, Islington; the Earl of Shaftesbury, who presided, was supported by Revs. Dr. Wilson, W. Vincent, J. Rooker, F. J. Sharr, W. T. Vale, Mr. Deputy Judge Payne, Capt. Mann, R.N., Messrs. Ford, Hytche, Lovell, Paton, Faithfull, Tabrum, &c.

Mr. EUGENE STOCK read the annual report of the Committee, which contrasted the state of the institution ten years ago with its condition now. *Then* the Refuge contained seven half-fed and half-clothed boys, the Ragged School was attended by about twenty children, and the premises occupied were dilapidated and unhealthy. *Now* the spacious new buildings provided a home for fifty lads, and a schoolroom for nearly five hundred ragged children. The report then described in detail the various operations carried on, and dwelt at some length upon the results achieved. The moral tone of the boys in the Refuge had risen greatly, and their answers at the Sunday afternoon catechising in Trinity Church had won the special notice of Bishop Alford, of Victoria, when incumbent of that district. A large number of the boys had been placed in good situations, and the great majority were giving entire satisfaction to their employers. The report then stated that the Committee had, at the request of the Council of the Reformatory and Refuge Union, applied to the Home Office for a certificate under the Industrial Schools Act; but the requirements of the Government Inspector were found so arbitrary that the design had been abandoned.

It was stated that a mortgage debt of £800 on the new buildings must be paid off by March, 1868. Towards this amount the Trustees of the Islington Hymn Book had granted £200 out of their profits, and nearly £200 had been promised otherwise; and the Committee concluded by an earnest appeal to their friends to raise the balance without delay.

The Earl of SHAFTESBURY, in replying to a hearty vote of thanks, said that, "While they had the example of great philosophers before them on the one hand, and while demi-philosophers in both Houses of Parliament were wrangling as to the settlement of the great question of the reduction of crime, they in Islington were wise in their generation, and had adopted the only essential system, and one which must be ultimately adopted by the nation, and were at work curing the evil while those philosophers were talking about it. The Ragged School and Refuge system was the only one that would meet the case, and it was only in Refuges that those children could be taught and qualified to go out into the world and do their duty to God and man. He saw hundreds of instances of success in the work, and he had one before him now, and one which they could, in a measure, enter into. The noble lord then related the history of "Punch," the boy encountered at Lambeth, by the "Amateur Casual," who had been taken into the St. Giles's Refuge, and had recently emigrated to Natal. He was firmly convinced that the boy, that riotous and incorrigible fellow, would become one of the best shoemakers in Natal, and—let them tell it not in Gath—Punch was in addition such a capital theologian that there need be no fear of his coming to harm, even if he met the Bishop of Natal himself. He then dwelt upon the demoralised state of the lower orders in London, and said, should any dangerous current of opinion be infused among them to disturb their regular course, the most disastrous consequences might be feared, so large was the body.

SOUTHAMPTON.

THE annual meeting in connection with these schools was recently held at the Victoria Rooms, when a large number of persons partook of tea. The meeting was presided over by the Mayor, J. R. Stebbing, Esq.

The report stated that during the year the number of new scholars admitted was 99, making a total of 1,338 who have been under instruction since the opening of the school. The average daily attendance has been 121; last year it was only 76, thus showing an increase of 60 per cent.

In the Sunday School also the attendance has materially increased, and averages 52 as against 35 last year. Still there are many who are yet without Sabbath School instruction, and the Committee are desirous that all who may see any wanderers on the Sunday, would direct them to the Ragged School, where they might be profited by the reading and expounding of God's Word. The Evening School, which at our last meeting had entirely ceased from the want of voluntary teachers, has, we are happy to state, been recommenced with an efficient staff of voluntaries, and the average attendance numbers 22. The instruction is of course elementary, but it would afford no small pleasure to visitors to witness the desire shown by the youths to improve in reading, writing, and mental calculations. The behaviour and general demeanour of the evening scholars is very becoming, and must have a lasting effect upon their general conduct. The Industrial Department is now in a prosperous condition, and by its reorganisation has mainly contributed to the successful working of the Day School. When a boy comes and asks for a night's lodging he is accommodated, with the understanding that he must give in return an hour or so in the wood-chopping department. When no boys are in the Dormitory then a certain number of day scholars are drafted off to assist, and this forms a part of their education. No trades are taught at the school, but simply habits of industry, which fit the lads to obtain situations and also retain them with credit. The paper-bag making has been continued, but the quantity made is not great. To purchase so many various qualities of paper would require a great outlay; but as it is not sufficiently remunerative to guarantee that outlay, the Committee are content with its present working. The tailoring has received some attention this year, as parcels of left-off clothes have been kindly sent by various friends. The task of renovating and mending devolves upon the elder boys, and must prove of great service to them, especially when destined for a seafaring life. The Dormitory during the past year has given shelter and accomodation to 16 boys. This number is considerably less than the average of past years, and is mainly attributable to the removal of the *Boscawen*. When that ship was in our waters, many lads who came from a distance to join her found a home at the institution till they were able to be received on board. Although we have had none of that class lately, yet some few wayfarers find a comfortable home for a day or two, and are thus saved from the dens of vice and immorality which are but too common in our town.

During the year 1,242 meals have been supplied, at a cost of £15 10s. 10d. The meals consist of 1lb. bread-and-butter and a mug of coffee, and if sufficient work be done the workers are entitled to a dinner of meat and vegetables.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. Dr. Wilson, J. Collins, C. Williams; and by Messrs. Buchan, Pegler, and Westlake.

Papers, Original and Selected.

BIBLE WOMEN: THE WORK AND THE WORKERS.

PRIMITIVE church history, as recorded in the Acts, and alluded to in the apostolic letters, shows that women were much used by its Divine Head in the planting of the Church. Thus it was Priscilla who aided her husband to bring the eloquent Apollos to the feet of Jesus. So the "beloved Persis laboured much in the Lord," and thus so helped to build up the Church of Rome as to merit the encomium of Paul. The four daughters of the great preacher Philip prophesied or taught the deeper truths of Revelation. Nor need we refer to those ancient deaconesses, who, as good servants of Jesus, became servants of the Church. It is true that this order has ceased to be recognised in the Church, but, happily, the duties have been done by godly women in all ages.

These and similar instances give full Bible sanction to women working for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ, if not as public preachers, at least as private evangelists. Well will it be for the Church when Christian women rise to the height of their mission; and so, in imitation of the primitive deaconesses, "lodge strangers, wash the saints' feet, relieve the afflicted, and diligently follow every good work" (1 Tim. v. 10). For then the original beauty of Christianity will be seen by all to the glory of our common Lord.

Happily, there have always been women who have more or less obeyed the apostolic precepts, and pre-eminently so in these last days. We need not, for example, search the annals of Ragged Schools to see how much Christian women have been used either in planting or in working those admirable institutions. We have not the means of ascertaining the *exact* proportion of our female voluntary teachers; but we think, from what we witness in Ragged Schools, that, were the female element withdrawn, we should not lose far short of two-thirds of our working staff. Their power over juvenile "roughs" is ofttimes astonishing, so that he who said that, in managing our juvenile waifs and strays, one lady was worth three men, was not guilty of any exaggeration.

These and similar facts doubtless suggested the propriety of enlisting the services of women as visitors and evangelists of those miserable females who *live* in the byeways of our great cities. Hence, as district visitors, women were largely employed in London and the provinces. But the idea of organising and separating women for aggressive Christian purpose is ascribable to Mrs. Ranyard, the author of "The Book and its Story." About eleven years ago she was deeply impressed with the woeful state—physical and moral—of the women who live, or rather *starve,* in the alleys of St. Giles's. It is not too much to affirm that the bulk were either thieves or drunkards—bad wives, and worse mothers. It then occurred to her whether some Christian woman could not be found of their own social grade, who would not only, by house-to-house visitation, point them to Jesus; but, as giving a reason for constant visitation, lead them to buy, by weekly instalments, the Word of God. Such a woman was soon found; for whenever has God a work to do without first anointing the special labourer? Having passed through deep waters herself, and reached the Cross through the Slough of Despond, she was just the person to sympathise with their temporal and spiritual wants. Speedily, by kind words, and still kinder deeds—by counselling them in health, and by tending them in sickness—the key was found whereby hearts once as hard as flint were unlocked. From this small seed the tree has grown to vigorous maturity, so that 242 Bible Women —for so these female missionaries are named—are now labouring in London alone. But not only in our own great Babel, but in the provinces, and even in America and India, Bible Women are found pursuing their useful labours, and with that signal success which always tracks faith like its very shadow.

Among other noticeable features of this mission, one may be mentioned—namely, that it is considered desirable that the Bible Woman should live in the very heart of her district—often in the mission room itself. Thus, in cases of emergency, the poor women whom they visit know where to find these true "mothers in Israel." From this centre the Bible Woman goes out twice a week to carry the Bibles already paid for by weekly instalments, and to canvass for other copies. Yet not merely to sell the Sacred Word do they make their stated calls, but, as throughout the week, with the view of reaching hearts which are drinking the bitter dregs of sin. Sympathising with misery; helping to tidy rooms, ofttimes squalid, if not filthy; not rarely helping to nurse the sick—they are able to

tell out the story of the Cross to those who, if deaf to gospel doctrine, are not callous to Christian kindness. From this they are invited to attend those Mothers' Meetings—true Bethels without the name—which are planted in the very midst of the crime-gardens of this great city. Some of these meetings are held in our own Ragged Schools; and we gladly testify that most Bible Women have much aided our movement, especially in inducing the wretched mothers to send their still more wretched children to our schools. Nor does the mission of the Bible Woman end in that mere moral reformation which still leaves the soul unsaved; but thousands have, through the love of the Spirit, been led to Jesus, who are now eminent proofs of what grace can do. Some of these not only "show piety at home," but are seeking, as Bible Women, to lead others to taste of the grace treasured up in Jesus.

One valuable feature of this mission to women is that each Bible Woman is superintended by a lady-volunteer, who, by almost daily advice, and by general oversight of the Mothers' Meetings, does her part to raise her poorer sisters. By this plan about 500 godly women, rich and poor, are engaged in this great work of social and religious reclamation. The following epitome of the duties of these lady-superintendents shows that the post is no sinecure:—Thus she has to (1) methodise the Bible Woman's work; (2) to keep the accounts of the Clothing Club; (3) to pay the weekly salary of Bible Women and rent of mission room; (4) to purchase clothing materials for Industrial Class, for cheap *re*-purchase by the poor; (5) she sees to the payment of all bills, and visits and relieves those who need it; (6) the teaching of the Scriptures in an acceptable manner to the mothers at their weekly meeting devolves upon her. Good reading and the gift of extemporaneous prayer are desirable adjuncts.

Like the City Mission, the Bible Woman's work is primarily evangelistic, and not an almsgiving one. Yet in winter, especially during the past one, money which has been specially given for the sick or the starving is distributed by the Bible Women principally in the form of bread, fuel, and flannel. Nor is this item "flannel" of small importance, since a Bible Woman employed in Walworth reported that "among the women attending her Mothers' Class, very few, she knew, had a blanket on their beds." But to supply this and other pressing needs about £700 was so given during the last financial year, and distributed by the Bible Women in concert with their superintendents.

We are glad to find that out of a total income last year of £17,341, nearly £6,500 was received from the poor women. Of this sum, they paid £5,474 for clothing, and £982 for Bibles.

As an illustration of the good effected, the following case is interesting:—A woman living in the neglect of religion was persuaded by the Bible Woman to attend the Mothers' Meeting at Darwen. After having attended some time, she said to her "Before I went to Mothers' Meetings, I did not think I could be made any better: I thought I was as good as I could be; but I have found out now that I come far short: I have found that my soul is not right, and I feel I want to hear more. It is a happy hour I spend thus, and I have found more pleasure there than I ever had in my life before. The singing is so glorious. I cannot sing myself; but I like singing, and I delight to hear them sing. When I got home from Mothers' Meeting, first time as I went, my husband says to me, 'Thou cannot tell aught as has been said; I says, 'Yea, but I can.' He says, 'Well, what? go on.' I says, 'Mrs. Davies said as we was to honour our husbands, and to make them as happy as we could. She said there were some husbands as were not worth so much honour; but their wives must honour them still, and they should all try to make the best of them, as they had them; and return good for evil.' The man lodger as lives with us says, 'Good; go on, Sally.' 'I can tell ye,' says I, 'if I live as I have been told there, I shall be a better woman than I am.'" Her husband encourages her to go now, and stays in every Tuesday night to take care of the children while she goes to the Mothers' Meeting. There is every reason to believe that she has now become a sincere follower of Jesus.

One other good effected by Bible Women may be noticed. When this Bible mission commenced, few persons in the haunts of poverty or of crime possessed a Bible; *now* there are few rooms where one is not found on the chest of drawers, with every sign that it is used. This has recently led, as might be expected, to a decrease in the sale of the cheap Bibles—liberally given as a contribution by the Bible Society. But then another desire has sprung up which the Bible Women properly encourage—namely, to possess a large-print Bible suitable for the aged, which costs them thirteen shillings. This, when at length bought by weekly instalments, they much prize, and show proudly to their neighbours; and what is better, do not let the dust witness that it is unread. As, in addition, it takes so much more time to

purchase this expensive Bible than the former cheaper one, the Bible Woman has more frequently to call at their homes, and so gets a stronger grasp of their affections. Many, indeed, who at first repelled the visits of the Bible Woman, were eventually won to Christ through her persevering love, and now are as God's lights in the wretched dens of this great city.

It remains only to notice one other feature of this movement,—we might say, the very life-blood of the mission—namely, its unsectarian character. Like Ragged School teachers, the primary aim of Bible Women is to win perishing outcasts to Christ, and not to proselytize to any church. Though selected from every section of the One Church, we are glad to indicate that they work harmoniously, and that none are tainted by the kindred heresies of Sacramentalism or Neology. Content to win souls, they interfere not with disputes about Church government, and thus steadily abide by the Divine canon (Rom. xiv. 19), "Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Happy is it, in a day when so many, led astray by a *mirage* of unity, seek to coalesce with the apostate Churches of the East, that there are those who find in Christ alone the true centre of unity. Those who now abide by this principle, after all, but antedate the time when "death is swallowed up in victory." For it is on this principle—oneness with Jesus, not uniformity in ritual or discipline—that Christians must meet in the land of eternal peace. Thus all those who now find in their Divine Head the centre of union stand on that platform on which they will meet at the coronation day of the Lamb.

IRISH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THERE are many flourishing Ragged Schools in the sister island, which have been found as serviceable in socializing and saving the destitute classes as those in England. Those in Dublin are chiefly managed by the agents of the "Irish Church Mission," and a large proportion are the children of Irish Romanists.

When first established they were subject to incursions of the priesthood, who, as haters of the Bible, detested Ragged Schools, as the Bible was the text-book of the teachers. Having obtained the names of scholars whose parents were Romanists, they visited the parents, and threatened to denounce them at the altar unless they at once withdrew their children. As might be expected, many quailed under these threats, and withdrew their children; but after a time their little ones crept back to the Ragged School. But, even

when this was not the case, the children became leavened with gospel truth and might be heard singing hymns, in which the glories of Jesus replaced the "glories of Mary."

Like the Sunday Schools in Wales, the Irish Ragged Schools are not confined to children, but adults flock to them in large numbers. Hence it is not uncommon to find grey-headed men sitting by the side of mere infants, anxious to be initiated into the mysteries of the alphabet. Many of the teachers speak in the Irish language—"*the tongue*," as the poor Irish poetically call it—and this gives them a power over their adult pupils greater than words can express.

The great aim, however, of the Irish as of the English Ragged Schools is to lead the attendants to Jesus; and hence the secular is only used as a lever to the spiritual. Their knowledge of the Bible would put many English children to shame; and the readiness with which they answer questions regarding the meaning of the texts repeated shows that they understand the sense as well as that they remember the words. It need scarcely be said that they are well versed in the points of difference between Rome and Protestantism; and few priests care to meet even ragged children, who at once *kill* Romish dogmas with Bible texts.

Like the Scotch Ragged Schools, the Dublin ones are partly feeding schools. As the meal provided is soup, the priests have given the nickname of "soupers" to those who attend these schools. But it must not be forgotten that the attendants are mostly half-starved—we might say *three-fourths* starved—so that it would be a solemn mockery, whilst training the soul, to forget the body. Let it never be forgotten that, if Christ taught, he also fed.

As in the English Ragged Schools, many of the children are orphans, or what is still worse, homeless. These need a home to supplement the Ragged School, and thus several well-managed Refuges have sprung out of the Ragged School system. Here it may be mentioned that Ragged Boys' Homes in London were simply a mission of charity for homeless outcasts; but in Ireland some of the best have risen up under the shelter of the Irish Church Mission to Roman Catholics. The ragged boys and girls of Dublin have three places of refuge thus provided, but that at Kingstown may be considered as belonging, more than the others, to the whole country.

The Ragged Boys' Home has lately cleared off its building debt, and these boys have had a good deal to do with the success of this effort. The gifts sent in were often very small, and often from the very poor. The papers bore such inscriptions as "Some poor readers," or, "There are four of us sending this [3s.], and may God bless the poor children." Situations are found for these well-trained boys, chiefly as pages and errand-boys; but one is with a photographer, two are learning printing, two more are at brass work, and one has entered the police.

The Ragged Girls' School is in Luke Street, near the quays, in an old house, cheap, and convenient for the children that attend the Day School, but without a playground or anything but the neighbourhood of houses as old and once as respectable as itself. The first-floor of the house must serve for washing, and feeding, and laundry-work, and playground. And now it has to be schoolroom too, for so great is the crowd of infant children who assemble there, that the schoolroom will not contain them. When we went in

we found the surplus children, about thirty, sitting in a temporary gallery, busily learning texts. Poor wee things! it would be hard to look at them with tearless eyes, dressed in rags, which appeared to be their covering night and day; bare feet, swollen with chilblains, hair uncombed and uncut; faces unwashed; and on many of them that pinched look of starvation and those large hungry eyes, which tell of misery, and starvation, and sorrow. In the upper part of the house there is a school for older girls, about sixty of them, of whom forty are entirely kept, and then sent out to service. Not long ago a young woman, well dressed, came into the morning Sunday School, and sat down in one of the classes. Presently the teacher noticed that she was in tears. "I think it's for joy," she said, "for as I sat here I was going back to long ago when I entered that door a dirty, barefooted little girl. I had never seen a Bible then, and I came to get a warm at the stove." Last winter, when these girls heard of the severe sufferings of the poor, they went to the matron and begged she would let them go without supper twice a week so that they might help others with what they saved.

The Home at Kingstown is called by the pretty name of "The Birds' Nest," and is a memorial of the piety and self-sacrifice of the family of the late Archbishop Whately. It is especially intended for the helpless destitute infants of mixed marriages, and, unlike the other buildings, is new, roomy, and substantial, and in a healthy country district.

One other Ragged School Home may be mentioned, as it sprang out of the Irish famine, and is solely intended for orphans. It is planted at Spiddall, near the Bay of Galway. Though this "Home for Destitute Children" is principally intended for those of the West of Ireland, yet many are received from the Ragged Schools of Dublin. This Home educates and feeds about sixty boys and girls. Wretched, downcast, and gaunt as they once were, no children are now more healthy and bright-eyed, with all the wit of the Irish peasantry.

Nor is this the only Ragged School Home in this district; for at Clifden there is one for girls, and at Ballyconree for boys. These, with their pleasant shelter and the hundreds of rescued children that have passed through them, are the creation of the missionary work of the last few years in Connaught. Moyrus is on the same coast, and, with its church and school-house, represents another direction of the same missionary enterprise.

The following narrative will show the difficulty of evangelizing the poor of Ireland, but the success of the experiment may well encourage all who are working for Christ in the wilder districts of our great cities:—

Twenty years ago the first Scripture-reader visited Moyrus, and a wilder spot could not be conceived. It was a bleak, stormy evening, and he was turned out of the cabin where he had sought shelter with a rough "We don't want any of your sort here: you must leave to-night." He went to the police barrack. "Leave the place at once," said the policeman; "for they're a bad set in it. They flee here to hide themselves from justice, and the sooner you are out of it the better." The Irish language was then the only one of the inhabitants, who hated everything British, and all progress, so that there was no public road to be seen in any direction. "Moyrus," said one of them "was morally, socially, and spiritually the worst place I ever knew." The Scripture-reader at length found a footing. "There's the very man," he

said once at a meeting, "who turned me out of his house that stormy night, and there isn't a stauncher convert nor a better friend." An excellent lady, now dead, collected the funds for the buildings, and for a partial endowment, at the cost of writing 30,000 letters; and there is now a mission-boat, the *Flower of Moyrus*, which sails over in an hour with a fair wind; and a congregation which a recent visitor describes as "numbering about 120 men, women, and children," all in their picturesque country dress, in which home-made red flannel was the principal material. . . . The service was in part English; but most of it was Irish. The power of the native language is singularly great. A girl, who had been induced by a friend to go to the church, was so overcome by an Irish hymn with the chorus, "Jesus can give eternal rest," that her heart was opened to Christ, and through persecuted she has remained steadfast.

As might be expected, the magistrate has now little to do in Moyrus, for the poor Irish not only believe, but *live* the Bible. Lately a priest entered a cabin with the view of inducing the inmate to withdraw his children from the Ragged School.

"Don't send your children to a Jumper's school," said one of them.

"Why, your reverence?"

"They are too young to learn the Bible."

"Oh, sir, Timothy knew it from a child."

"But that was said in the Old Testament, and is all passed away now."

"No, sir, it's in St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy."

"I may as well go," said the priest.

Trained as these children are for man as well as for God, we see in these Irish Ragged Schools and Homes for the Destitute the prophecy of a time when the "Emerald Island" will again become—what it was for so many centuries—an island of saints.

HOMES OF THE POOR.

Surrounding the Ragged School buildings in One Tun Alley, Brentford, are many small courts and intricate winding alleys, where dwell the industrious poor. Did our readers ever visit these lowly abodes? If so, there can be little doubt that the event proved a happy one for some forlorn homes. But it is necessary to make use of the eyes and ears, and have a guide. A terrible poverty rests, like "a dark and dismal shadow," upon the place; and at this season of the year starvation is prevalent. The people, however, many of them of the hard-working class, are comparatively unobtrusive; they do not beg by profession, and much suffering is borne in secret. Being inured to privations, they are happy when they know of a morsel of food for the next meal. The distinction, no doubt, may be made of the provident and improvident class; but there are at this moment in Brentford hundreds, we believe, of deserving and necessitous persons—so necessitous that, without a little timely aid, they could not subsist.

Comparison being in most instances the true test of merit, the value of an institution can be estimated only by a knowledge of the circumstances or

wants which called it into existence: and since the claims of the Central Ragged Schools and Town Mission of Brentford were in a measure brought before the public the other day, we determined to see and judge for ourselves. A sight of the school-children is quite enough so far as the Ragged Schools are concerned; but to judge of the mission field, and the more genera charities, it is necessary to have an introduction behind the scenes. So minded, we drove with a friend to Brentford, to visit the homes of the poor.

Arrived at the schools, where there was a good attendance of little ragged urchins, under the superintendence of Mr. Fernley and Miss Howe, we met Mr. T. Gurney, the missionary, who accompanied us through part of his domain. We found it a dismal one, and the record cannot fail to partake of the same character. All around lay the homes of the poor—in the Back Lanes, Bull Lane, Sweeps' Alley, One Tun Alley, and no end of alleys, lanes, dirty narrow streets, courts, and out-of-the-way corners. Many of the houses consisted only of one storey and sometimes of one room, and looked on the outside something like lumber sheds or very bad stables—admitting little light or fresh air. The inside of these and others may be described. Immediately on leaving the school we made a call—for we had no distance to walk—at what we shall designate

House No. 1. Scrambling up a dilapidated staircase, we entered a small apartment, dingy and dirty. Here sat an old man, apparently in a world of wretchedness, his feet among the ashes, in order to have the full benefit of a small fire. His age, we were told, was eighty-five; he was very deaf, and nearly blind. He hailed the missionary with delight. His wife, ten years younger, lay ill in a small apartment adjoining, in the midst of a gloom still more profound. In this inner room the furniture consisted of a bedstead; but everything, like the aged couple themselves, appeared to have seen better days. These people receive nothing from the parish, and have no income except what comes by way of private charity.

House No. 2. There were here five apartments, one or two of decent size, the others small. They were thus tenanted: In two rooms, sixteen persons; one room, five; one room, two; and one room, one—a blind fiddler. The first room, on entering, and through which the other inmates of the house had to pass, contained a man, his wife, and six children, clean and healthy looking, but ragged. The furniture had been sold, one article after another, for food; and there were left only a small quantity of crockery-ware, a kettle, and a form on which the family sat. Three of the children were without shoes or stockings. The husband and father, we believe, is a hard-working man, employed during the seasons in the market gardens. The mother has been respectably brought up, but a large family and no work has made shipwreck of their prospects. They pay, or ought to pay, 3s. of weekly rent.

House No. 3. We next met with a little basket-maker, a girl seven years of age, who has been two years at the trade, making pottle baskets. She is very scantily covered with rags, and her fingers go nimbly—no loitering, even to look at strangers who handle her work. There are eight of the family, and an elder girl, of sixteen, sells oranges and water-cresses. They manage to subsist, but when work fails them, as it often does in the winter, they feel the pinches of want. They occupy two rooms, each about three yards square.

House No. 4. We saw a woman with two or three children, but there were more of them. The husband had been ill, and the mother, who earned 9d. or 10d. a-day in the summer, could get nothing to do in the winter. There were some rags—otherwise bedclothes—huddled up in a corner, out of which, at night, two beds were made for a family of seven—no bedstead and almost no furniture. The poor creatures had tasted nothing since the preceding day, when they had a basin of soup from the soup-kitchen.

House No. 5. There were here six in the family; the mother was dividing the last piece of bread in the house, and that had been obtained from the Mission Society. The husband was out of work, and there was scarcely any furniture. Yet, strange to say, they had given shelter, and a share of their food, to a young man who had come to Brentford in search of employment.

House No. 6. Another little hovel, the abode of a cobbler—an old man afflicted with asthma. The house consisted of but one room, which was so small that when its occupant sat down his back touched the front of the bed, and his knees almost reached a narrow shelf in front of a miserable aperture called, we suppose, a window. On being told of the unhealthiness of so small an apartment, he replied, with animation—"Oh, it is so warm and comfortable!"

House No. 7. A woman, apparently worn with suffering, lay ill in this house, having been in the same condition for seven years. The husband was out of work. There were two or three children. A married daughter tended her, and the young husband had a little work.

Our visit, we were assured, might have been prolonged indefinitely, for there were hundreds of families in the like deplorable circumstances. But we had seen enough. In walking through the lanes, numbers of people accosted the missionary in the hope of getting relief; and it is evident that in this necessitous district, there is urgent need for larger disbursements. This can only be done by increased help on the part of the benevolent, whom we advise personally to visit the homes of the poor, to a few of which we have made passing reference.

A CHINESE MOTHERS' MEETING.

BY MRS. LORD, OF NINGPO.

THE Mothers' Meeting met as usual on Tuesday afternoon. There were ten present, which I think very good, when I consider that the present time is the Chinese holidays, and most of the people are busy, either in play or receiving company. Our subject in course was the good Samaritan, and I cannot help thinking how much more intelligently these poor women now listen to the Word than they did two or three years ago, when I first commenced these meetings. Then, too, they were all heathen; now, with one or two exceptions, they are all Christians: then, if I could get five or six together, I felt myself very happy; now I consider ten a small number. These week-day meetings are attended only by the women of our immediate neighbourhood.

On Sunday morning I have a different kind of meeting, attended by the female members of the church who live at a distance, and are mostly less instructed than those who live near us. I have, therefore, to be more simple in my instructions to them. New inquirers, both men and women, attend this meeting. On fine Sundays we have from fifteen to twenty-five persons, besides a goodly number of children. This is, to me, a very interesting meeting, where I see the first budding forth of the word of truth.

As the fruit of house-to-house visitation, from amongst these women I hope to find two more Bible Women as soon as the holidays are over; Mrs. Ranyard has promised to support them. My old Bible Woman continues to labour faithfully, and the Lord is blessing her labours. Thus you see how much I have to make glad my heart amidst discouragements not a few. The gospel is proving itself to be the power of God to the salvation of sinners here. In this, I know, you will joy and rejoice with us.

HOW REFUGES ARE FILLED.

As inquiries are constantly made as to how the boys and girls are admitted into the St. Giles's Refuges, it is desirable to say that any homeless or friendless child requiring an asylum is admitted to the Refuge at once. Such often apply themselves, or are brought by policemen, city missionaries, and others, who happen to meet with these outcast ones. Every case is investigated to ascertain the truth of the statement of the applicant. It will therefore be seen that no votes are necessary, no canvassing is required, no half-yearly election to be waited for, but that each case stands purely on its own merits, and no expense whatever is incurred by the child or its friend, whoever that may happen to be. If the troublesome, vexatious, and expensive system of canvassing and delays of election were adopted by Refuges, it would be a proof that the children were neither homeless nor destitute.

When a poor child is cast on the streets, it requires a home at once, and the hand of kindness and sympathy held out to rescue it from starvation, misery, and vice, without loss of time. This is just what is done by Refuges, and hence it is they have been so signally blessed, and command the admiration and support of all whose hearts are influenced by the spirit of Him who came to "seek and save the lost."

Out of the cases lately admitted into St. Giles's Refuge the following is given to illustrate the working of that institution:—

A coloured boy, once a slave, was found by a silversmith in the City, wandering about near his shop. The very fact of seeing a lonely little black boy sauntering about the streets was sufficient to attract any one's attention, yet somehow or other many of these poor outcasts seem to be passed over unnoticed. But in this instance it was not so, for the heart of the citizen was moved with compassion for the little African, and finding from the boy how matters stood with him, he sent one of his shopmen with the little fellow to the Refuge, where he at once found a home and friends.

The account the boy gives of himself is this:—He says he was born near

Charleston, South Carolina, United States. His father and mother, with a brother, and his father's brother, were brought from Africa and sold to the owner of a plantation not far from Charleston. There were nearly 400 slaves on the estate, who were all freed by the war. He gave a very graphic and interesting account of the ecstasies of these poor slaves when they heard they were free. On the occurrence of this event, the father and mother, with this boy, another lad, and the father's brother, left the estate and went to Charleston, where the father obtained employment. After the parents had been some time in Charleston, the father took a fever and died, and a year or so afterwards the mother was carried to her grave by the same dreadful malady, thus leaving this little one an entire orphan, and quite alone and friendless, for his brother had gone to sea, and his uncle had returned to Africa. He gave a touching account of the character of his mother, especially in teaching him to pray; and when asked what she taught him to say, he repeated in a calm, orderly, and reverential manner the Lord's Prayer; and when asked what else his mother taught him, he said she told him to be a good boy, and "den de Great Farder would be a farder to me when she was gone;" and when asked who the Great Father was, he said, "God." Poor little fellow! who could help feeling for such a friendless boy? Finding himself alone and destitute on the death of his mother, he set out for New York, in the hope of getting a ship there and working his way out to the Cape of Good Hope, where his uncle had opened a barber's shop. He did not succeed at New York in meeting with a ship, so he went to Boston and other seaports with the same result; at last he managed to reach Quebec, where he induced a captain to let him work his way to Liverpool. On arriving there he was told he had better get to London, so some one put him in the "straight road," as he called it, and in ten days he reached the great city. He fared pretty well on the road from Liverpool, but on reaching London he was again doomed to disappointment, for although he went to the docks, he could induce no one to take him to the Cape. He tried to get in at the Strangers' Home and the Sailors' Home, near the docks, but these doors were closed against him, and so he had no alternative but to wander about, and after doing so, and being utterly destitute, the Great Father, whom his kind mother told him would be a father to him, inclined the heart of the gentleman before mentioned to take pity on the boy and send him to the Refuge, and here he is a happy and contented lad. May God bless him, and make his stay here a real blessing to him! An effort will be made to send him to the Cape of Good Hope.

How many thousands of such waifs and strays might be saved by a little earnest and self-denying effort.

HOPE FOR ADULT CRIMINALS.

Many persons seem to think that the reclamation of adult criminals is impossible. And why is this? Because few real attempts have been made, or plans which were inapplicable to their cases were adopted. Cases, however, have come under our own notice where men steeped to the lips in crime have been restored to society, and, what is far better, have steadily served

the God whom they once dishonoured. Let us never forget that the last person saved by our Master when on the cross was a robber; and, happily, many of a kindred class have felt the power of his blood in our days. What is needed is real faith in the Gospel, for such faith can as easily remove this as any other mountain.

Prominent amongst the recent efforts made for the social reclamation of adult criminals are those of Mr. Organ, and which he fully described at the meeting of the Social Congress at Belfast.

Mr. Organ, the inspector of released convicts, is the head of a department in what is known as the "Irish Intermediate Prison System"; and for the last twelve years he has been endeavouring to reclaim the adult criminal. Such prisoners were singled out as seemed hopeful, and it was his province to deal with these convicts until he could safely recommend them for work, and then to procure work for them. "I reasoned with them patiently," he says; "I listened to their imaginary complaints silently and carefully, but I always waited for the proper time to arrive when I could with effect point out to them the fallacy of their arguments, the errors of their judgments, and the childishness, and in many cases the viciousness, of their conclusions. And when I had their minds in a proper tone, and myself in safe relations towards them, I addressed them upon social subjects and God's work; so that while I taught them their duties to society and to themselves, I also impressed upon them the providence, power, wisdom, and mercy of that great Being whose laws they had outraged, whose power they had defied." But when through disappointment and unwearied patience his object was so far gained, fresh difficulties met him from employers, by whom he was received either coldly or uncivilly. All difficulties, however, were bravely borne; labour was obtained; those whom he could he visited on Sunday mornings to advise with them and help them to persevere; and he has now the satisfaction of reporting remarkable successes, and of seeing his *protégés* faithful, honest, respected, and well-to-do. "I shall never forget one Sabbath morning," he says, "when, riding on a country road in the vicinity of Dublin, I passed by a large concourse of peasantry on their way to church. My attention was drawn to one little group, consisting of a well-dressed man and woman and two young children. That man was a released convict, the woman was his wife, and the two little ones were their children. I was much moved at this sight. That man was once a bad and demoralised criminal. Some years before I apprenticed him to a stonemason. He is now foreman in a builder's establishment; he has a happy, cheerful home, some cows, pigs, poultry, &c.; and his wife keeps the village dairy." This is work which has all been done without noise, without the aid of patrons, and, as Mr. Organ puts it, "all that is necessary is to have faith in the work, and to abide by the advice of the Redeemer."

The following incident is noticeable, as it illustrates the spirit in which the aim is pursued:—Some seven or eight years ago, upon a cold, wet, and windy winter's night, a returned convict, sullen in his manner, and of rather a forbidding cast of countenance, entered my office in Smithfield. I asked him the object of his visit. "I want employment, sir," said he; "I am hard up, but I am willing to work if I can get it to do."

"Well," said I, "it happens just now that I have not work for you, and

from the manner in which you speak, it would appear that you are under the impression that it is part of my official business to provide employment for you; but I must tell you plainly that it is not. I seek employment for well-disposed men, no doubt, but at my own cost and trouble; and besides, you have been absolutely discharged, and I have no legal control over you."

"That is true," said he; "but what am I to do?" And saying this, he left me rather displeased and disappointed, speaking to himself in a menacing tone of voice. After he had gone away I remembered the important question he had put to me, "What am I to do?" That night I went to his home, and sat down, resolved to wait till he returned. When he came, I said to him, "You have been rather rude to me to-night."

"Well, sir," he said, "forgive me; I did not mean to insult you, nor would I stand by and see any man offend you; but you know, sir, I am out of work, and have no money."

"Can I trust you?" I said.

"Yes. I will never disgrace you."

I provided work for him on the following day in the establishment of an English merchant. Since that night that man remains with that employer, and is one of his most confidential servants, occupying a position of great responsibility and trust, and what is more, by his conduct he has opened avenues of employment for many of his fellow-convicts, who, like himself, proved themselves worthy the confidence reposed in them.

BIBLE-WOMEN AT WORK.

As giving a minute account of the mode in which Bible Women work at home and abroad, we extract the following case from the *Missing Link Magazine*, the organ of this Female Mission:—

A Bible Woman was at church one week evening, when a Christian friend asked her if she was encouraged in her work?

She answered, "No, not much; she had waited and prayed for it, but encouragement did not come."

"Is any other door of usefulness opened to you?" was the next question.

"No, none at all."

"Well, then, take it for granted that the Lord will have you stay here and work on, for there are many souls to win."

This Bible Woman called to see a person who was said to be dying of inflammation. She found a young woman of most repulsive appearance, with crime and daring written on her brow. She read to her the history of Mary Magdalene, and remarked that there had been mercy even for her, out of whom Jesus himself had cast seven devils.

She listened, and said, "Come again," and early the next day the visit was repeated. The doctor had then given up his patient, and said she would not be alive by nine o'clock that night. But "I thought," said this good woman, "I would try a poultice of linseed and turpentine, and I had strong faith that God would give her to my care, both body and soul."

When I began to read again and to pray with her, and to ask Jesus to

save her as he saved that poor dear Mary Magdalene, she burst into tears, and presently whispered, "Can I speak with you alone?"

Her husband and friends left me with her, and then she said, "What you say Mary Magdalene was I am. Oh, I have been so wicked! I was brought up in sin from twelve years old. Is there mercy for a thief and a sinner like me?"

"Yes, mercy for the chief of sinners; mercy for you, and you may live to tell that you have found it. I fear the man you are living with is not your husband, but he may still become so. 'Turn ye, turn ye from your evil way, saith the Lord, for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. Why will ye die?"

She did not die. She recovered, and I watched over her, says this Christian sister, through months of deep agony of soul, for God gave her a sight of herself as soon as she got a sight of Jesus the Holy One. Yes—a sight of herself, and he made her review all her past life in the light of his own love and purity. Often in the night she could not sleep for her thoughts, and with naked feet she would run out to tell me of her sins and her fears.

At last she resolved to leave the man with whom she lived, much as she really loved him, unless he would marry her. He was a haddock salter, and had once been transported for four years for theft; but they seemed attached to one another, and for six years her home had been his during her life of sin. He scarcely saw that marriage was needful, but he did not wish her to leave him; so one bright morning I lent *him* my son's waistcoat and trousers, and I lent *her* my wedding-ring, and I went to see them married; not before I had persuaded him to kneel with me and ask God's blessing on the beginning of a new life. When he came out of church he said, "Well, now, what will you have?"

I said, "I will have nothing."

"Oh," said he, "you do not come all this way for nought. I'll stand treat. Only say what you'll have."

"No," said I; "I have my reward when I look at your wife. See how she is changed for the better for you;—and some day I *will* have a cup of tea with you."

Oh, it is indeed a changed home! She lives close to Jesus. Her very face is changed! And he has taken the pledge, and from the bare and desolate place their dwelling was it is now a little palace. Last time she came to me she said, "You must drop in now, for we're so nice. I've really got a stair carpet!" And oh, when I *do* take a cup of tea with them, what a welcome I get! She is now received into membership with the Church of Christ, and a twelvemonth has tested the change. She goes to all the services, and how she prays for her husband, and reads to him till the tears drop! And once she got him to a prayer-meeting. She calls for a blind old woman, and reads to her, and brings her to worship.

The following narrative of a day's work of a Bible Woman in Bombay indicates how kindred are the difficulties, and how akin are these Hindoo and these English female missionaries in their yearning for souls. Sarah Manger says, in her journal:—

"Went to Matharpahdy. Many women were sitting at the gate: some

were selling sugar-cane, and others carrots; and some were conversing. I went up and asked them, 'May I come in their company?'

"They said, 'Oh, yes; we won't be tired of you.' I listened to their conversation for a while, and requested them to hear me read, to which they had no objection. I with willingness read to them the second chapter of St. John, and when I had finished the miracle, with explanations, I asked them what they thought of Christ? An old woman left her carrot-basket on one side and came close to me, and said, 'Truly he was God;' and said further, 'What good words you have got in your book!'

"I said, 'Not my book, but God's holy book for all the people also, and He spoke much.' She and two men heard me very attentively; more than the rest. I read to them much more, and they were very happy. May the Lord sow the seed in their hearts! After leaving these women, I entered a bungalow, and read and explained to the servants' wives the third chapter of St. John. When I was explaining the 16th verse, one of them said, that in her country, at Sholapore side, there is a Hindoo goddess, and she is a true one, and that a rajah heard her fame, and came to see her; and when he had seen her, he despised the goddess. And when he was not gone a day's journey he was full of boils and sores covered over his body; so he had to go back and worship her, and at once he was cured from those sores. I showed her how foolish it was to believe that dumb idol, and began to reason with her; and she tried to get away, and said that she could not stop to speak with me any longer, and said, 'Come some other time,' and went away.

"On my way home went in a garden, saw some women, and read to them the sixth chapter of John, and explained. They were astonished, and said, 'With five loaves and two fishes five thousand were filled. What a wonderful thing!' one said, 'he was a God.'"

A ROYAL CLOTHING CLUB.

PROBABLY there is no operation of Ragged Schools which has done more social good than our clothing clubs. The mere smallness of the sums received by their kind conductors—chiefly ladies—renders them attractive. For so large (!) a sum as one shilling is rarely received, and a halfpenny is never refused. Yet, in the total result, these clubs well illustrate the "power of littles." For, small as are the sums received from depositors, we were able to report last year that, in the 91 clothing clubs attached to our Ragged Schools, no less a sum than £1,984 was paid in to the managers, leaving above £21 per clothing club.

Of these 91 clothing clubs, 19 were confined to adults, and 16 more received money from scholars' friends and relatives. Some clubs pay twopence in the shilling as a premium; but, even when no interest is given, the depositor derives some pecuniary interest, as the articles, which are purchased in large quantities, are sold at wholesale prices to the depositor.

These clubs are of as much benefit to adults as to children. For, as respects our scholars, they operate as silent protests against sweetmeat shops, where too often gambling on a small scale is carried on; while in

adults they have checked the base habit of drunkenness or gluttony, and taught them the wisdom of not spending to-day what they can do without till to-morrow. Many parents' children, too, have been clothed, during winter when work is scarce, from the product of their own savings; and thus the habit of self-help has been taught to a class who are too prone to rest on human crutches.

We are glad to find that our beloved Queen has copied this example, by not only founding, but by taking a personal interest in the children's clothing club. From the report just published of her Majesty's clothing club, it appears that during the past year the number of poor depositors was 589. They were divided into three classes. The first class, in which there were 177 depositors, paid 6d. a-week for forty weeks, or £1 in all, and to this 3s. was added from the bounty of £100 annually bestowed by her Majesty for this purpose. The second class, in which there were 182 depositors, paid 4d. a-week for forty-five weeks, or 15s. altogether, to which amount 3s. was also added from the Queen's bounty. In the third class there were 230 depositors, each of whom paid 2d. a-week for forty-eight weeks, or a total sum of 8s., and these likewise had 3s. added to their savings. The total amounts thus deposited reached the sum of £177 for the first class, £136 10s. for the second and £92 for the third class—altogether £405 10s.; the Queen's bounty increased the amount to £505 10s. Last year there were 558 depositors. The savings of the depositors in the royal club are expended in the purchase of clothing for the winter.

Poet's Corner.

WHAT SHALL I GIVE?

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

Give prayers; the evening hath begun,
Be earlier than the rising sun;
Remember those who feel the rod;
Remember those who know not God.
His hand can boundless blessings give;
Breathe prayers—through them the soul shall live.

Give alms; the needy ask with pain;
The orphans mourn, the crushed complain;
Give freely; hoarded gold is cursed,
A prey to robbers and to rust.
Christ, through his poor, a claim doth make,
Give gladly for our Saviour's sake.

Give books, they live when ye are dead;
Light on the darkened mind they shed;
Good seed they sow, from age to age,
Through all this mortal pilgrimage.
They nurse the germs of holy trust,
They wake untired when you are dust.

Give smiles to cheer the little child,
A stranger on this thorny wild;
It bringeth love, its guardian be—
It, helpless, asketh love of thee:
Howe'er by fortune's gifts unblest,
Give smiles to childhood's guileless breast.

Give words, kind words, to those who err;
Remorse doth need a comforter.
Though in temptation's wiles they fall,
Condemn not—we are sinners all.
With the sweet charity of speech,
Give words that heal and words that teach.

Teachers' Column.

DON'T USE DICTIONARY WORDS.

In a conversation on the best mode of talking to children, some amusing specimens of attempts to interest children were given.

One ran thus:—An able man was trying to address a Sunday School, and used the word "summary." Pausing, he said, "I fear, children, I have employed a term you will not readily comprehend. I allude to the term 'summary.' It is synonymous with synopsis." Exactly,—that was about as clear as mud.

Another said: "Children, can any of you tell me what is the ostensible design of Sabbath Schools?" There was a pause. He repeated the question; whereupon one of the scholars piped out, "Yeth, thir!" followed by a burst of laughter, which at once put an end to the inquiry.

We recently saw a man rise to talk to a large mass of children. With a due solemnity of tone, he began thus: "The scene which we now behold is one of unparalleled sublimity," &c. It soon became one of unparalleled restlessness.

Teachers, so talk to your class that they will not need to search a dictionary to find out your meaning.

TEACHERS' MISTAKES.

"THERE may be teachers," says the *Wesleyan Sunday School Teachers' Magazine*, "who never make a mistake before their scholars; but I am not one of them. How many slips in secular subjects I have had to correct, in their presence, I need not say; but the mistakes to which I refer just now, are those which arise from a hasty judgment. Having several times got wrong in this respect, in my early efforts at managing children, I will confess some of my errors, in the hope that young teachers may avoid giving unnecessary pain, either to themselves, or their scholars.

"I had only been in charge of my present school a few days, when I considered it necessary to bring the case of one of the scholars before the whole school. He had frequently displeased me, and, as it appeared to me, had done so designedly. The gallery was full, and I spoke to the children earnestly and affectionately; and then told them the details of Charles's offences. The scholars listened attentively, and I continued,—'Now, boys, I have not known you long; but I have no doubt Charles was a naughty bo

with the former teacher; now, wasn't he?'

'No, sir,' said the boys, with one of the most convincing simultaneous answers I ever succeeded in obtaining. This was said firmly, but respectfully, and without previous concert. Charles instantly burst into tears. After a short silence, I said, 'Well, boys, I certainly thought Charles was a bad boy; but I am very glad to find he has earned your good opinion; and I promise you, if he deserves a good character from me, I will gladly give it.' Charles continued in the school a good while, and I have often seen him since; but all his subsequent conduct has convinced me that I was too hasty in my original censure.

To impress scholars with a feeling of reverence, during the time the teacher is commending them to God in prayer, is of great importance; but at the same time very difficult. I had several times heard a whispering during the devotional exercises, and thought it high time to discover the culprit; so, one morning, after the opening prayer was concluded, I told the scholars of the complaint I had to make. Having impressed them with a conviction that it was an insult to the great God to talk during the time we pretended to be engaged in prayer, I said to them, 'Now, I wish the scholar who was whispering during prayer this morning to stand.'

To my surprise, and that of the whole school, there stood up a meek, gentle boy, against whom no one ever had a word to say. Though he received the reproof that I gave him in silence, his tears fell fast; and, when I had finished, he tremblingly replied, 'Please, sir, I was trying to pray with you.'

On another occasion I judged it necessary to entirely separate a troublesome boy from his schoolfellows; hoping that, by leaving him to his own thoughts for a time, he might see the folly of his ways. During the playtime two of the scholars from the top of the first class went to him, and were engaged in earnest conversation with him, when I caught them. A very severe reproof was at once delivered; the burden of which was, that the discipline would now lose its value, and that, of all boys in the school, these two had the least excuse for encouraging a scholar in his naughtiness. 'Please, sir,' said they, 'we were telling him how naughty he had been, and were urging him to ask your pardon.'

I need not enlarge; experience has improved me, though I cannot profess to be quite cured; but of this I am sure, a vast amount of unnecessary pain is caused to children by hasty censures. The best way to avoid them is to govern under the direct guidance of that wisdom 'that cometh from above.'" W.

Children's Gallery.

THE STORY OF A WORKHOUSE BOY.

Some years ago, among the mud of Plymouth docks, playing with other ragged little fellows, was one Johnny Kitto. The boys were hunting for old iron to sell, and thus earn a penny. Johnny had a kind mother, but a poor drunken father, who spent all his wages at the ale-house, which of course kept the family very poor—so poor, that when Johnny was four years old, he was sent to live with his grandmother. That would make one less mouth to feed. Grandmother loved the little boy dearly. She taught him to read until he could read to her the great family Bible; and on rainy Sundays, when she could not go to church, he used to turn a chair into a pulpit, and read like the minister. It was not sport. Johnny seemed to feel

that for the time he *was* a minister. He liked to hear stories; and there was an old barber near who used to tell him funny ones. Sometimes he helped the barber, and with his earnings bought little books. Johnny and his grandmother often went into the fields and spent the day. Oh, it was so pleasant to eat dinner under the trees, with the birds singing over head.

When he was ten years old these happy days ended. Grandmother was taken sick, and she and Johnny had to go to Johnny's home to live. The little boy went to work with his father; and what do you think? he fixed up the garret for a *study*. He made a shelf for his books, and had an old table and chair, and here he used to take all the time he could to read and write. That was the only chance he had. I do not find that he ever went to school.

He had been at home about a year, when a dreadful thing happened. His father was a mason. One day when he was carrying bricks to the top of a house where his father was at work, Johnny's foot slipped, and he fell thirty-five feet to the ground. The poor boy was taken up for dead and carried home. For two weeks he took no notice of anybody. One morning he opened his eyes and asked for the book he was reading the day he fell. He tried to get up, but could not move. His mother went to his bedside and told him he must lie still. Johnny still kept asking, and cried, and thought it very cruel that nobody answered or spoke to him. The truth was, Johnny had lost his hearing; and from that time he never heard a sound again. The fall had hurt his head and made him entirely deaf. The little boy got well of his bruises, but he could no longer be of much use to his father; and it was quite a question what a poor, deaf boy could do.

Grandmother died; there were other children to be taken care of, and Johnny was sent to the workhouse. Was not that hard? Well, not so hard as it seemed, for the overseer of the workhouse was a kind man, and felt for poor Johnny. He gave him easy work to do, and lent him books to read. Johnny was an obliging, well-behaved lad, and made friends of everybody. Still, he felt lonely among strangers; and in his loneliness he prayed God to be his friend. He remembered how much comfort his dear grandmother took in God; and would not God pity and love him? Oh yes, for God is love. And Johnny found it so. He became one of God's dear children; then he was happy, and more contented than he ever was. His was a hard lot; but God's love can make a hard lot happy.

Johnny kept a journal. You know what that is. A little book to write down everything in. I find something in his journal which I think shows what kind of a boy he was. Some one gave him ten pennies on a Fair day. Would you like to know how he spent them? "Piece of mince-pie, one halfpenny paper, threepence; books, threepence; one halfpenny apiece to five little girls; gave to B. B—— one halfpenny; one halfpenny left." Could tenpence be spent better? He did not eat them up, as some children would have done, or spend all for himself. Was it not generous to share a part with those five little girls and B. B——, who, I dare say, had nothing?

The overseer of the workhouse thought so much of Johnny that he interested others in him, and some gentlemen raised money to take him out and give him an education. He went into a missionary printing-office, and there, by his diligence and piety, earned himself an excellent name. When he grew up he became a writer, and wrote many valuable works. One is called Kitto's "Pictorial Bible;" another, a "Bible Cyclopædia." I need not of course stop to tell you all he wrote, only to say that, in consequence of what he had done for the cause of religion and literature, the Queen gave him a pension of £200 a year. He married a good woman, and had a little family; but he never heard the voices of his dear children.

Dr. Kitto is now in heaven. He died a few years ago, and is where the deaf hear and the dumb speak, to praise God for his gift of Jesus.

A DEATH-BED SERMON.

A LITTLE girl went to a Sunday School in Westminster for about two years. Her conduct was always very exemplary. Her parents paid no regard to religion. When, on a Sunday, her father was going out to take his pleasure, she would often say, "Father, the people are going to church, why do you not go?"

Her death was caused by an accident, some boiling liquid being thrown over her. She lingered until the next day, and then died, aged eight years. She bore the anguish with great patience and resignation; and about two hours before her death, she said to her father, "I am going to heaven; I hope you will go to chapel, that you may hear of the Lord Jesus, and go to heaven when you die." He promised to do as she requested. He accordingly attended public worship, and the first discourses he heard all seemed to be directed only to him. He then had reason ever to remember his dear child, and her words, for a great change ensued. He constantly attended God's house. The word of eternal life was blessed to his soul, and he became a communicant.

There was also a change at home; the mother attended the chapel with her husband. Thus, through this little girl, a whole family was brought to God.

What are *you* doing for God? Have you given *your* heart to Jesus? For that comes before preaching.

Editor's Note-book.

NOTHING TO DO.

LET no one say, "There is nothing that I can do." Nothing, in a world so full of sin and ignorance and sorrow? Nothing, when so many schemes of practical philanthropy have been devised, and when some of them are even falling to the ground for want of hands to carry them out?

Surely it needs but to be known that you are willing to work, for work to be found for you in abundance. Is there no sick or aged person to whom, if you feel that you cannot speak words of your own, you can read God's word? Is there no one whom you can invite to go with you to the house of God? Is there no vacant class in the Ragged School? Is there no district where you can distribute religious tracts? Is there no friend to whom you can speak kindly and faithfully about salvation? Is there no great religious society which you can help in working?

It may be quite true that you are unfit for some kinds of labour, but do not therefore infer that you are unfit for all. Ask your pastor if he can find you nothing to do; or ask any earnest Christian man whom you see engaged in diligent work. Best of all, go to the footstool of Jesus in the spirit of willing consecration, and ask, "Lord, what wilt THOU have me to do?" Remember that—

"The smallest effort is not lost;
Each wavelet on the ocean tost
Aids in the ebb-tide or the flow;
Each rain-drop makes some floweret blow;
Each struggle lessens human woe."

"TELL THEM THAT GOD IS LOVE."

SUCH was the message of the late Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen, a Senator of the United States, as he was dying, to the students of the college over which he presided. When asked if he had any word

of counsel or advice for them, his earnest and touching reply was, "*Tell them that God is love.*"

So rich and glorious and attractive did the love of God appear to him, as to fill the field of his spiritual vision on his deathbed. With more than the fresh feeling of the young convert, who thinks he has only to tell the impenitent his own views and experience to win them at once to the Saviour, so he seemed to feel that if he could but tell these young men of the love of God, and they could but see it as he did, they would be won to devote themselves for ever in love to him and his service.

If there is any message that will touch and soften and melt the heart of outcasts it is the love of God in Christ Jesus to us sinners; that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." If we ever "love him," it is "because he first loved us."

Spread then the blessed tidings that "*God is love.*" Proclaim it earnestly, affectionately, continually, to every creature, in the Ragged School, by the tract, by the printed volume; pray for the Holy Spirit to attend the message.

PORTRAIT OF A GOOD EVANGELIST.

1. He should preach orderly.
2. Have a ready wit.
3. Be eloquent.
4. Have a good vein.
5. A good memory.
6. Know when to *make an end.*
7. Be sure of what he advances.
8. Should venture and engage body and soul, wealth and honour, for the Word.
9. Suffer himself to be buffeted and mocked by every one.

Such was the portrait of a good preacher, which was drawn by that prince of modern preachers, Martin Luther. So much did he illustrate these points of a good evangelist, that he unconsciously sat for and drew his own portrait. Dear reader, has he drawn yours? For we think it is equally a photograph of a good Ragged School teacher.

It is true that a preacher is mainly a gospel messenger to adults, and so requires different gifts to those who only address the members of a class. Yet, is not a Ragged School teacher equally a missionary for Christ? If he is not, he ought to desist from the work. If he is, he needs to be as thoroughly equipped for his special work for Jesus, as does the public preacher. He, then, who does not put all his powers, natural or acquired, into his class, cannot expect that he will win souls. But when our gifts, however small, are thus put forth, the weakest become as giants; and our pathway to heaven is illumined with redeemed souls. For it is still a law of Christian work whether among old or young, that "he who soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, but he who soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully."

Our Library Table.

Dick Catcham, the Ragged School Boy. By FORWARD. London: Macintosh.

WRITTEN by an experienced Ragged School teacher, this sketch of the life of a street arab has all the interest without the evils connected with the trashy sensational tales which are now, alas! so fashionable. The incidents narrated are as true as striking; for many Ragged School teachers could supplement them from facts which have come under their own notice. Like ourselves, we are sure that our readers will find it difficult to lay down this narrative until they have devoured every page.

As giving some idea of the style of this

book, we extract the following description of a bedroom in one of the by-ways in the far east. Would that it were singular, instead of being but a type of thousands of homes in our great cities. Can we wonder that fever or cholera reign in districts where men and women live more like swine than human beings? Our author gives this pen-and-ink photograph:—"When I first became acquainted with Dick, his home was with his mother in a six-roomed house. This lad had missed attending his class on the Sunday morning, and I called to inquire the cause of his absence. I found his father, mother, a girl of fifteen years, my lad of fourteen, with a younger sister living—if it may be so called—in a room about 10 ft. by 9 ft. The bed, an old four-poster, stood within three feet of the fireplace; and there the father, mother, and two children took their nightly rest. Two others slept in one corner of the room, whilst the other was occupied by my scholar and a brother. The table formed the nightly resting-place of the two boys, whilst a chair and a box formed the bed-place of the elder girl and her sister. The mother was near her confinement, and this room must suffice for the hour of her trial. Sleeping, eating, existing in this room—is it to be wondered at that the progeny were turned into the street to play with the dogs or children therein to be found?"

The Contrast. By A. L. O. E. London: Sunday School Union.

This is a New Year's address to Sunday scholars, but it is equally suited to the children of Ragged Schools. It needs no words of ours to recommend it, written as it is in A. L. O. E.'s impressive style. A part is avowedly based upon the striking narrative of the Petitbourg Colony in France, which appeared in this magazine in February last year. From its startling character, it excited much interest at the time, and we are sure that this interest will not abate now that the tale has been rewritten by so skilful an author.

Notices of Meetings.

STRATFORD.

The fourteenth anniversary of the Ragged School in Chapel Street was held on the 19th December. Alderman Lusk, M.P., presided.

Dr. Nicholson, after a very able address from the chairman, read the report, from which we extract the following particulars:— Since the last report nine lads had been placed in the Royal Navy, and five in the Royal Marine Training Ship at Woolwich; five as signal boys on the Great Eastern Railway. A large number of boys and girls had left the schools and found employment in factories, and were gaining an honest livelihood. No boy from the school had been taken before the magistrates, much less convicted of any criminal offence, during the past year. The largest number attending the school had been 248, and the smallest 50—on Guy Fawkes day. Average attendance at the Week Evening School 40; Sunday Afternoon School 100; and, what was much to be deplored, the master said there were no teachers to help him in this department. "On one of their evening visits the committee were much gratified on seeing in the school two boys dressed in the Royal Navy uniform. On inquiry it turned out that they belonged to her Majesty's ship St. Vincent, lying at Portsmouth. Their conduct had been good, and a fortnight's holiday had been granted to them. They had returned to the old school, where they had received what little education they possessed, and whence they obtained through the kindness of the master their present berths. A third boy also taught in the schools, and from the same ship, had accompanied them, but he had gone to visit his friends. It was a source of great

pleasure to see these lads neatly dressed, cleanly and respectful, coming back to the old school to spend an evening of their holiday, in trying to improve their stock of knowledge. Several of the most destitute children have been partly clothed with warm comfortable apparel, and some elder boys and girls have been furnished with a decent suit of clothes to enable them to take situations, for it was found on inquiry that they would have been rejected unless respectably clad. The expenses so incurred have not been defrayed out of the general funds, but from private sources entrusted to the Ladies' Committee."

The accounts showed the expenses to be £133 17s. 8½d.; receipts, £145 12s. 3d.

The meeting was addressed by the Rev. Allan Curr, W. Carter, H. J. Stanton, and Mr. J. G. Gent.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman, who had given a contribution to the school of £5 5s., brought the proceedings to a close.

UNION WALK.

On Tuesday, the 14th ult., an interesting meeting of the teachers and friends of the Union Walk Ragged Schools, Bethnal Green, took place. The occasion of their gathering was to present a testimonial to their esteemed hon. secretary, Mr. D. G. Edis, and to congratulate each other on the removal of a debt of £170 from the school finances.

The speakers were the Revs. J. Trevitt and J. H. Edden, and Messrs. James and Tappin.

The gift consisted of a handsome marble timepiece, bearing the following inscription:—"Presented by the committee, treasurers, teachers, and scholars to D. G. Edis, as a mark of esteem for his devoted labours during a period of upwards of six years."

LEICESTER.

The annual meeting of the teachers and friends of the above schools was held on Tuesday, December 31st, at the Young Men's Christian Association Rooms, Rutland Street; the Rev. A. A. Isaacs in the chair.

From the report read by the secretary, it appeared that since the opening of the schools, in January, 1867, upwards of 150 children had been admitted for instruction, the majority belonging to the most destitute portion of the juvenile population of the town, many of them not only ragged, but homeless. The schools have been conducted most efficiently, and judging from the many ameliorative agencies brought into active operation, the teachers must have had no easy time of it. Writing classes have been held, a savings' bank established, and a weekly distribution of soup and bread has taken place; in addition to the Sunday evening teaching. The report spoke hopefully of the impressions made, and said that results of a pleasing character were already visible, in the improved looks and cleanly appearance of many, and in the marked absence of the curses and foul language that formerly polluted the conversation of the elder boys, which augured well for the future. From the financial statement it appeared that subscriptions, &c., had been received to the amount of £51 17s., and the expenditure had been £53 15s. 6d., leaving a balance due to the treasurer of £1 19s. 6d. The apparently large outlay is explained by the necessary expenses incurred in cleaning and furnishing the schoolrooms. The report thus concluded:—"The present position of the schools has not been attained without much difficulty and labour. The discouragements have been great, but the teachers are resolved to persevere, and they ask from Christian philanthropists their sympathy and help. The institution is wholly unsectarian, and therefore dependent for support on the general public of the town. Unable to throw themselves upon the large-heartedness of any section of the Church, the Committee now appeal for their second year's income to all who hope to merit the approval of the great Master: 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, ye did it unto Me.'"

Papers, Original and Selected.

PREACHING TO SOCIAL OUTCASTS.

THEATRE SERVICES.

No one can visit the byways of London or other great cities without perceiving that Sunday is the great gala day of our social outlaws. In the alleys of St. Giles's, and amid the ruins of the Devil's Acre, they may be seen any fine Sunday afternoon by hundreds, dressed in fustian or in faded finery. But what are they doing on that sacred day? Are they listening to out-door preaching? Nay, for they are smoking, gambling, "larking," and not rarely, stripped to the waist, fighting. Their language is too terrible to pen; for it is not too much to say that every fourth word is an oath or polluting, whilst most of their actions are too vile to depict. It need scarcely be said, then, that the Sabbath chimes awaken no echo in their souls; for what is the Sanctuary to men whose avowed creed is, "A short life and a merry one"? Content thus to live without God, they die without hope—and that in a land where the gospel of the grace of God is taught in thousands of pulpits every Lord's day.

But even a class so far above this, morally, that they would shudder to be classed with such social wrecks—namely, our stalwart labourers—do not spend their Sundays in any better way. For the bulk not only say, but really *think*, that religion was meant solely for the well-to-do classes, and not for labouring men. Hence, if, like the dangerous classes, they permit their children to attend Sunday or Ragged Schools, it is not from any sense of religion, but solely to get them out of their way on the only day they can do as they like. Take the following true account of a labourer's Sunday, as given in the "City Mission Magazine":—

"The working man here [Notting Hill] but too frequently after finishing up his week's work on Saturday afternoon, spends his evening at the theatre, concert-room, or tap-room, while his poor wife does the best she can in the way of marketing with the remnant of his earnings. He returns home somewhere about midnight, we will suppose, perfectly sober, though this is by no

means always the case. A hot supper has to be provided for him, and at an advanced hour he retires to rest. The following morning he is heavy-headed and unrefreshed; but 'tis of no consequence: it is Sunday morning; he has not to repair to work, and therefore can lie as long as he pleases, and he usually indulges himself in this way to a considerable extent. By eight o'clock the stillness of the Lord's-day morning is disturbed by loud and discordant cries from vendors of different commodities, pre-eminent among whom is the Sunday newsman shouting at the top of his voice, '——— paper—a penny.' He knocks at the door of our working man's house (our working man being a regular customer), and leaves a copy. It is taken up to our working friend, who, reclining in his bed, takes a survey of the contents of his oracle. Presently he gets up to breakfast, and afterwards, while the church bells are inviting worshippers to the house of God, he saunters out, not forgetting to take his paper with him. He returns to dinner. After dinner, while his wife is cleaning up the place, which she has not had time to do before on account of the dinner preparations, he lies down to read his paper more leisurely. A little before tea he gets up and cleans himself. After tea some friends call in, and the evening is spent in conversation on the current topics of the day and the gossip of the neighbourhood, and thus wears away a working man's Sabbath."

Need we say that classes like those described require to be reached by some special gospel agency? They are mostly too old for Ragged Schools, even if the pride of manhood did not preclude their attendance. It was this fact that first suggested the use of our larger Ragged Schools as preaching stations on the Lord's day. Such services—significantly called "Ragged Churches"—are now held in nearly 100 Ragged Schools, with an aggregate attendance of about 6,000. Many of these preaching stations are aided, pecuniarily and otherwise, by our sister society, the "Ragged Church Union." The largest are conducted by unpaid preachers, who, so that they may declare the "unsearchable riches of Christ" to their outcast or destitute brethren, heed not the strange attire, or the sin-worn physiognomy, of their strange congregations. By this means hundreds of men, sin-worn and self-weary, have been won to Jesus.

Many of our Ragged Churches, however, are more attended by the destitute than by the outcast classes. Thus in most Ragged Churches the class known as "roughs" only occasionally attend;

and when they do come, by a species of moral affinity, they speedily form knots, shouting, and stamping, and grimacing. Not rarely they have to be forcibly expelled; the more civilized attendants, who regard them as nuisances, eagerly volunteering to eject them. Yet, after all, these—shall we say wild beasts?—are but samples of what humanity is, when, left to itself, it is unrestrained by the grace of God. We are then called to warn them, in season and out of season, of "the wrath to come," or else we shall have to meet them at the Great Assize with their blood staining our garments (Ezek. iii. 18). For the resurrection-law of Christ has not been repealed — "preach the gospel to *every* creature," whether old or young, be he moralist or outlaw; and happily this injunction implies that no one is too vile to find the grace treasured up in Jesus.

Facts like these led some Christian men, under the leadership of Lord Shaftesbury, about eight years ago to engage various theatres and music-halls as centres of evangelization; or, in other words, to preach to the roughs of London. Conducted by ministers and others who really believe that there is a hell, and one way only of escaping its horrors, they have attracted large masses of those who as much shunned the house of prayer as if it were a Lazar-house. But even more than this: the rich spiritual fruit which has come out of these services proves that the gospel is not that effete thing which some modern pseudo-philosophers, who are ignorant of its power, describe it to be. For robber and harlot—men steeped to the lips in crime, and women sin-stained and world-weary—have found theatre-preaching a kind of ladder to reach the Eternal City. Some of these are living such lives of devoted service as to put hereditary Christians to the blush; whilst others have gone into the presence-chamber of Him whose grace plucked them out of the mire of sin.

It appears by the last report of the managers of these theatre services that during the past season, the Surrey Theatre, the Pavilion, Whitechapel, Sadler's Wells, and the City of London Theatre have been thus engaged. In addition, services have been held in music-halls in Shoreditch, Edgware Road, and Marylebone. In these services ministers of every denomination have cordially engaged, thus gladly placing their views of Church discipline in abeyance, if haply they might win souls. It is estimated that above 200,000 persons, chiefly men, were thus brought under the sound of the gospel.

The Rev. Dr. Cumming gives the following striking photograph of the motley congregation to which he preached at the notorious Victoria Theatre, New Cut :—

"On a December Sunday evening, we found ourselves seated on the stage in the Victoria Theatre. It was crowded as on evenings when some wild drama full of robberies or murders is the attraction. In the boxes were a few of the aristocracy of the New Cut, wearing blue cloth dress-coats that had done duty for twenty years, and made their appearance at christenings, funerals, and executions. In the pit were rows of costermongers, with sprinklings of working men wearing flannel jackets, with red, and blue, and spotted cotton neckcloths. Varying the mass were women, some very young, with fluttering rags that conceal, but do not warm. One rocks her infant on her knees, and hushes it to sleep, as if anxious to hear the preacher. Another jogs her husband when something is said that comes home to realities in the New Cut. Sunday clothes, in the strict sense of the word, are exceptional sights, and look as if disqualifications for a pew or seat in the Victoria. In the gallery are clusters of dirty boys, evidently the *habitués* of that elevated place. One wonders that there are no shrill whistles, slang cries, and roars of laughter. There is at the beginning plenty of noise, arising from disputes about room, or precedence, or priority of tenure. But after a little it subsides. The audience is plainly that of the usual week-evening house. Only it is Sunday, not Saturday. A hymn is sung—the sounds would throw Costa into convulsions, and upset the proprieties of Westminster Abbey. Yet there is an earnestness in the roar that we miss in the Temple, and an absorption of feeling and thought, and an uncouth but intense attention to the business in hand, that the choristers of our cathedrals would do well to adopt. Prayer is offered up. No ecclesiastical authority has laid a civilizing hand on these worshippers. There is no sign of attention to rubrics. St. George's-in-the-East and St. Barnabas-in-the-West have never been in the Victoria. A few attempt to kneel; numbers shut their eyes and lift up their faces; some turn their backs on the stage, and some on the gallery; and a good many sit still, not sure of the nature of the work, or acquainted with the canonical way of joining in it. The preacher selects a text; he is new to the audience, and the audience is as new and original to him. Down these pale cheeks, that had once blushed, and from those eyes, still retaining their lustre, tears flow, and occasionally

over all the audience a stillness reigns, that proves reality to be more effective than fiction, and the story of a cross erected on a Judean hill, 1,800 years ago, to have lost nothing of its power."

From the *Record* we abridge the following account of a service used in the Standard Theatre, Shoreditch. It was opened for the first time for the preaching of the gospel on February, 10th ult., and attracted an immense number of men from the miles of vice and misery of the far east. The notice says that at a moderate calculation there could not have been less than 3,000 persons. We were present at the opening of the doors, and for a considerable time scanned the people as they entered. Without doubt they were the very class whose absence from our regular places of worship recent conferences in London and Liverpool have lamented; and as we witnessed them, some in fustian and some in corduroy, and some certainly in broadcloth—but broadcloth that, with its owner, perhaps, had once seen better days—we could not but muse that after all it was better to work than to talk, if we would solve the great problem of the Christian Church in these days. The order of the people during the service, from the first moment of entering the house, was an example to many of our more popular places of worship. The Rev. J. H. Wilson, secretary of the British Home Mission, was the preacher to this immense mass of unfolded sheep, and never did preacher more fully follow the model of his Divine Master. From beginning to end, the sermon was full of parables, Scripture pictures, and illustrations from ordinary life. The appropriateness of some of the illustrations given may be shown by one used. "A French minister," said the preacher, "once made the nature of faith very plain. He said, 'As I was coming to chapel, I saw an old man go up to a metal pillar, touch a spring, and the water came and filled the pitcher, and he went away. I saw a little girl go up and touch the spring, and fill her pitcher, and go away. Now the man may have known something about how the springs within worked to bring the water up, but that was not needed before he could get water: it was enough for him that he knew there was water there, that he felt the need of it, and that he believed that he would get the water if he touched the handle and pushed it down. The little girl could know nothing about all this, and yet she got all she went to the well for.' Now Christ is the well of living water, and he says"—(quoting texts). The assemblage dispersed in the same orderly manner in which they had entered.

The success of our Ragged Churches and the results of theatre preaching may well incite every Ragged School worker to more vigorous labour among our poorer brethren, old or young. For in every case where the *pure* gospel is taught to children, or preached to adults, it is seen that it is as much adapted to the spiritual needs of mankind now as when Christ taught on the slopes of Olivet. May we not then well say, notwithstanding the sneers of the scoffers of these last times, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it IS the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Let us thus labour on in faith, whatever be our special sphere of service—be it Ragged School, Ragged Church, or Mothers' Meeting—"until the daydawn, and the shadows flee away" for ever. For the promise will then be fully realised, "Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy."

A PHOTOGRAPH OF KENT STREET.

BY REV. JAMES AMOS, M.A.

PASSING over to the south side of the Thames by London Bridge, and going some little distance, we reach, on the left, Kent Street. There is a meanness about the houses, a wretchedness about the people who are flitting about, together with a darkness due to the nearness of the opposite sides of the street, unbroken by any substantial crossways, which makes the stranger feel that this is rather a rough place. The key, however, to understanding the state of things here, is to consider that one side of Kent Street, for about half a mile long, is the side of a large triangle. Now, fill this triangle with a network of alleys and courts, and cut out approaches to these, on the Kent Street side alone, and further, give life to the whole by throwing into it upwards of seven thousand human beings. You may now write Kent Street across the whole triangle, for the whole goes by the name. It will be evident that the few stragglers in the main street itself are as nothing compared to the mighty army which is lying in ambush just behind. It will also be seen that if Kent Street, as it is, is the high street—the only outlet to some thousands—is the centre where the ginshops, the lodging-houses, the pawnshops all lie—that those who naturally will most congregate here, will be likely rather to be the very refuse of the entire people.

The state of the people, as a whole, claims our real attention. A small house, none too big for a poor family, will have a family occupying each room, and this continued from house to house, with only a break here and there. It is very well to speak hardly of the squalor of the poor man's home, of the dirt of his children, or even of his intemperate, licentious, and heathenish habits. If you and I had to be shut up in his one

room, and if we happened to have a large family to share it with us, and if it had, in itself, and at the very same time, to play many parts—to be the general bedroom, our kitchen, our nursery, our laundry, and our study—I much think that, before we had paid our first week's rent of three shillings, we should be very well content to allow that not absolutely to sink under the difficulties of the position, would be really a wonderful thing, if not heroism itself. Shut up in your wretched little room, if you keep it clean, it will certainly be surrounded by many rooms which are not, and it will probably be situated in a yard or court, in which—through drains beneath, and cabbages lying about above—the conditions exist under which you and yours will be liable to catch any illness that may be prevailing, from scarlatina to cholera. It may be interesting to notice what is done here on an alarm of cholera: we will take the late visitation in the metropolis during the autumn of 1866. About six hundred people were taken seriously ill with symptoms of cholera, but the deaths were confined to nine. The clergyman of St. Stephen's Church and his helpers found room for that useful work of making minute inquiries into the condition of the people every day, in their own rooms, and of stimulating them to use all the means of prevention within their reach; each street having thus diligent and intelligent inquirers in it, every day; each case of illness having generally a dose on the spot given to it to begin with; or, if at all a bad case, it was anxiously watched, while the whole population was constantly reminded what to do and where to go in case of need, and exhorted generally to caution and chloride of lime. It was impossible not to feel what a very important element at such times is a previous knowledge of the people over a considerable district, and of their habits and individual characters. If you have to do with the poor, for you to know them thoroughly, and for them to know you quite as well, is evidently a very highly desirable relationship to exist when a subtle pestilence is abroad, attended, as it always must be, with unusual destitution, which demands a freer charity, ever ready to be dogged by the grossest imposition. Some bottles of medicine—a preparation of laudanum—were laid in at our schoolroom. Being made of the very best drugs, it proved very useful. Over one hundred and fifty bottles were sold at sixpence each, and going a long way, the rooms of each person who had one, became something of a dispensary. The medicine gained a good footing very soon, from a mother having purchased for her son, on his starting for Holland, one bottle, as her parting gift. On the voyage, the story went that two of the crew were taken seriously ill with cholera. The careful son gave each of the men but half a dose, when such was the virtue of even this, that they very quickly recovered.

How is it that cholera comes? is a large question; how it is *retained* would seem a more simple one. In Kent Street there were several points of attraction for it. One of these was a row of houses, under which went a drain; another was a line of houses, to several of which quantities of fish, in a bad state of putrefaction, were brought early in the morning, three times a week, to be smoked—their heads, and other parts of them not required, being carried away in a worse state, in the afternoon. On these afternoons, surrounding windows had to be shut, and the men who happened to be at home, and indeed, some of the women, sought refuge from what was so unwholesome

and unpleasant, in their pipes and tobacco. Another point of attraction was the public dust-bins. In some of our back yards and long line of houses piercing into the rear, there is no place for what is refuse and offensive in each house; and the arrangement is for a common pit to be made in different central positions, to which the refuse is brought from a certain number of families, varying from ten to two hundred. Unfortunately, together with what is put in from those entitled to the privilege, there is, from various quarters, surreptitiously in the night, put in much that is inconceivably horrible. The dustman removes the contents of our pit once a week, and what is experienced by those passing by, during the time of removal, is expressed in that vigorous language which cannot well be written down. For health, this pit ought to be in the very centre of Salisbury Plain; but being in the centre of a crowded poor population, it is, of course, not so well.

The way of supplying water to us has a good deal to answer for. Let there be one good-sized tub in the back yard, filled early in the morning; this has to furnish water for all the families in the same house. One pipe will come in between two houses: a piece of lead, branching out either way, directs the water into the twin tubs of the two houses. If your next-door neighbour's wife is an early bird, and has a wash on, it must not surprise you if the piece of lead, on which your house depends for supply, is bent round to fill her own pails and pans, and turned back again as before, just as the water is all turned off—when you, of course, have none. Sometimes for days together, the water is not turned on at all; but let it be, and let it be good, the top of the tub, alas! has been stolen; and what may not come into it from without? You have, moreover, not cleaned out your tub, perhaps, for many a long day, and what may not come into it from within?

Has food nothing to do with making and keeping people healthy? By hook or by crook, the poor people of London will have a taste of meat now and then, but they must go to the very cheapest markets, and they need not go far. It is not merely that they get queer bits, that nobody knows where they come from, but they are frequently far from being in a wholesome state. I am much afraid that no very satisfactory account can be given of the fish, of which so much is cheaply sold to fill ravenous mouths; and it may be safely concluded, that there is a world of good which might be done by those who have the time to go into the whole matter of feeding the poor, and who know how to set about it.

But what is so remarkable in Kent Street and its environs, is that such conditions of life as have been described prevail without the least interruption throughout the whole place. The parish of St. Stephen's may be described as one bundle of rags, and all of the very sorriest description, tied up very closely together, and flung on one side. If there was any natural connection between these poor folks and those better off, the case would not be so bad; but there is none. There seems to have been long ago a careful sorting, lest the least bit of silk or satin should remain, if there ever was any. Not a thread of these has been left behind. To families depending upon vegetables and fruits sold in the open streets, a wet, cold, or otherwise unfavourable season—sometimes a change in street law—will threaten the most abject destitution, and this all in the same place, and about the same

time. It is sad to have before one so often the same wretched pith of a story, told to-day by a decent woman. "I have just been selling the feathers out of my pillow, and my wedding-ring must go soon; but as I have worn it for thirteen years, it has got so thin, that I am afraid it will not be worth much."

It must not be passed over, the fact for which Kent Street has, for more than a century, had an unenviable reputation, namely, that thieves make our secluded courts their abode and refuge. This class does not number above two hundred adults, who give themselves entirely to a dishonest life, and who, thoroughly trained to it, are ready for any opportunity for carrying it on; but probably three or four times that number are seriously involved in their practices, and who, where there is a pretty clear field, are ready to act in the same way themselves. Men and women being taken to prison is only too common; and children, also, not in their teens, have been in gaol, as expressed in a recent case, more times than they have toes on their feet. Dreadful tales of violent death, of brutal violence, of licentiousness, and intemperance, might be given; but I wish to place before you Kent Street as a whole, and I should say that the attitude into which the people as a whole fall, is that of a people thoroughly absorbed in making ends meet. It seems nothing less than a stand-up fight for life of every man, woman, and child. It is this state of things which gives almost an unnatural penetration, quickness, and vivacity to the people, rather difficult, perhaps to cope with, extremely impatient of wrong or being trifled with, but which, if properly directed, is suggestive, perhaps, of great results. But alas! in this struggle for the merest existence, amid unwonted life and stir, still, as regards the unseen and spiritual—all therefore that is truly ennobling and permanently elevating—there is found to prevail an unwonted unconcern, ignorance, deadness.

May the hope be entertained of this being overcome! Here I launch you into the Kent Street Mission work, as carried on by the clergyman of St. Stephen's, Southwark, and his helpers. There is the National School, which is somewhat scantily attended by about one hundred children; principally of those, comparatively few, who have regular weekly wages. To meet the case of the poorer people, there is a Ragged School in Henry Street, at which about one hundred more children attend. In the work of education, the parish is greatly indebted to two other Ragged Schools, carried on in the best spirit, in larger rooms than ours, of longer standing, and with rather superior numbers, by different bodies of Christians. The children in the Ragged Schools in Kent Street generally come because the parents want to get rid of them; and they are taken away very early, because they want to make use of them. A considerable number never go to school at all. All the schools want secured to them much more help than they have, that they may be carried on in the very best way inside; and they require great attention being directed to them outside, by the parents being told of the importance of their children going, and going regularly, and going as long as possible.

LUCKNOW RAGGED SCHOOL.

We are glad to report the progress of the Lucknow Female Ragged School, an account of whose origin was given in our last vol., p. 103. It appears that, of the total cost of £40 per annum, nearly a moiety is contributed by a ladies' working party in the north of England. It is satisfactory to find that, whether our plan for the social reclamation of the outcast or destitute be tried abroad or at home in pseudo-Christendom, or among far-off paganism, it is found equally powerful to socialise and to save.

Miss Reuther, the Superintendent, says—"The girls who compose Lucknow Ragged School are taught reading, knitting, and sewing by their teacher Catherine; and lately an old Moulvie has been engaged to teach them writing. I hear some of the lessons every morning when I am able to go. The elder girls read Barth's Bible Stories in the Arabic character, others read the first part of the Daira-i-ilm in the Persian, and those not so far advanced have the spelling-book. A large number of the girls have only lately entered the school, and are learning the alphabet in the Arabic character. They learn hymns by heart, and I hope soon to teach them a little singing. They are taught to knit socks, and to make their own clothes. Their hours of instruction are from 7 to 10 a.m., but they come half an hour earlier to bathe and dress their hair. Those of them who are too ragged to appear in their own clothes, exchange them for those belonging to the school. This brings me to your kind inquiry about the latter. The numbers of girls have so much increased lately that we cannot provide them all with clean clothes during school hours. Any clothes, therefore, which you may kindly send will be thankfully received. The 'kurtas' (jackets) which are made high up to the throat, are preferable to the cut-out ones, the former being those worn by native women.

The mothers seem to have no interest in the school whatever, but merely send their children for the sake of the *pice*. The girls themselves, however, I am happy to say, seem almost all of them anxious to *please*, and therefore learn their lessons well. There are none, I am afraid, who like to learn for the sake of learning itself. Still it is encouraging to see that they care to learn well at all, whatever may be their motive. Their teacher Catherine is a native Christian. She is not so good a teacher as my English notions require, but I fancy better ones are rare. She is willing to do as she is told, and that is a great thing; but her ideas of discipline are very bad, which seems to be generally the case among natives. She does not seem to hear it when the girls make a noise enough to deafen me; neither does she think it strange that they should be running out, or drinking water without leave. All this I have yet to get accustomed to for the present, but I shall do my best to introduce better order. I scarcely know what more to tell you. I hope, however, that I have not left any point untouched which might be of interest to you and other friends at home. If so, I shall be happy to supply any further information you may wish for, to the best of my ability."

There are 39 girls in the school, their ages varying between 13 and 14 years. The average attendance is 30.

ON BOARD THE "AKBAR."

We had recently, says the *Christian Times*, the privilege of attending a meeting of the Liverpool Juvenile Reformatory Association, which was held in the Mayor's Parlour at the Town Hall. Our attention was specially directed to the *Akbar*, and we decided to pay her a visit, in order that we might see for ourselves the ship and the boys so frequently and agreeably referred to in the course of the meeting. The vessel is anchored in the Mersey, within easy reach of the Liverpool landing-stage, and it is worth anyone's while who is interested in these things to pay the ship a visit. All the boys on board the *Akbar* are tainted, or rather have been tainted, with some crime, and knowing this beforehand, one might expect to see some very bad faces among them. Well, it must be admitted that there are a few faces among them not bewitchingly beautiful; but a visitor who would make bad faces his guide to the *Akbar* boat would never find his way to it. On getting into her, we were surprised to find ourselves in the midst of such a set of merry-hearted and good-looking youths; and as they pulled away to the ship, with a right good-will, one could not help feeling perplexed between the pity for the state of civilisation which rendered the *Akbar* necessary and admiration for Captain Borland's system of discipline and management, which could make the boys so contented and cheerful under the circumstances.

The *Akbar* is not very enchanting to the sight, neither on board nor in the distance. The old two-decker has evidently seen the best of her days, and has come at last to what ought to be quiet anchorage after the storms of life. Only her anchorage is anything but quiet, especially in the winter. Not long since the weather was so rough that a number of the Akbar boys, returning to their ship in a boat, had a narrow escape of being lost in the dark and tempestuous night. Still the situation of the ship is good for the health of the crew, and conveniently situated for the land and for communication with the town. At present there are about 176 boys on board, and all of them, as far as we could see, were healthy and cheerful. Their general tone and appearance is far more natural and cheerful than is ever exhibited by the inmates of a prison. We saw nothing of the suppressed and sneaking look which characterises so many prisoners. Their life on board the *Akbar* is much more natural and healthful than it could possibly be under the present unsatisfactory conditions of prison life.

Although there is nothing showy about the appearance of the *Akbar*, she is well fitted up for the requirements of a nautical and juvenile reformatory; and Captain Borland must have been very ingenious and persevering to bring his plans to such a satisfactory condition of maturity. It would be difficult to suggest any further improvement for the comfort and convenience of the ship. The boys have on deck plenty of room to scamper about and play; their dining-tables are conveniently swung, and fold up neatly when not in use. The sleeping apartment is kept very clean and healthy, and supplied with abundance of fresh air. The library is well supplied with books, and the *British Workman* is a great favourite among the boys. Formerly a Bible was given to the boys on leaving the ship, but Captain Borland has

sensibly reversed this order of arrangement. The Bibles are now given to them when they first go on board, and this method yields an opportunity of judging what use they make of their Bibles, and what care they will take of them. The results are very gratifying; and it is devoutly to be hoped that the boys who take so much care of their Bibles will learn from the holy book to take care of themselves.

There are boys on board this training-ship from almost all parts of England, and it would be difficult to send them to a better place. Nottingham, Manchester, and we know not what towns besides, have furnished their contributions to make up the happy crew. All the boys, as we have said, have been convicted of some offence before a magistrate; but while the criminal requirement must continue, there are other things which should be amended As far as it can be ascertained, all boys sent to the *Akbar* should have a decided *penchant* for a seafaring life. A boy who loves to be a land-lubber will never make a good old salt, and a boy who buries his head in the blankets when the wind whistles is not fit to breast the ocean wave. Sickly, rickety, and feeble boys are of no use on board the *Akbar*, and yet the complaint was that such had been sent to the ship; and the complaint was not against Liverpool for sending them, but against those surgeons at a distance who were more generous than wise in their certificates. If we are not mistaken, a boy must be in prison for a short season before he can be sent to the *Akbar*, at least in the case of some towns—a worse than ridiculous arrangement certainly. If a boy is intended for the ship, let him be sent to her without the preliminary pollutions and terrors of a prison. Any English magistrate can apply for the admission of a boy to the *Akbar*, and he will be supplied with a printed form to fill up; but the boy's committal must be for five years. The five years' condition gives the managers of the ship a discretionary power over the boys, by which they are assisted in securing industry and good behaviour. When a boy knows the shortening of his time rests with himself, he is put at once upon his best behaviour.

The boys make their own clothes and shoes, do their own washing—in short, all the work required is done by themselves on board. Half their time is spent at school, and half at work and play. Captain Borland acts as banker for the boys, and his self-imposed task must bring him a deal of extra labour. The boys are allowed to earn a little, and whatever they get in the way of presents and rewards is at their own disposal. Many of them are learning to be frugal under the friendly guidance of their voluntary banker.

The nautical training which the boys receive is well thought of in the port of Liverpool, and the boys are eagerly sought for by many merchant vessels. Some of the boys, of course, go wrong, and lapse into crime after leaving the training-ship; but most of them do well, and settle down into habits of honest industry, and after being long and far away on distant voyages, they don't forget to pay a friendly visit to their old home on board the *Akbar*, where they are always sure of a hearty welcome. If any of our English magistrates read these lines, we should recommend them not to forget the *Akbar*, and if they succeed in getting a suitable youth on board of her, they will have procured for the young recreant a good chance for a new and better start in life. H.

A SKETCH FROM NATURE.

He was but a little fellow; yet in him there was a spirit of cheerful endurance. His lot seemed hard. Labour of the most unattractive kind filled up his day, whilst at night he shared with many others the small comforts that his home afforded. Little was there about that home to give it its endearing name. His father had been dead for many a year, and his mother, a frail woman, was not of the stamp to make her little yield its most. The lad, though but ten years old, was the support of the family, and by his steady toil procured for all the little that they got. Oft as he trudged to work in early morning, when the clear air was unpolluted by the furnace smoke, and when nought was heard save the sharp brisk sound of the call-bells from the neighbouring factories, did he wonder when he should grow to be a man, to do a man's work, and have a man's wages. For it seemed to him the best thing that could be was to be a *man*. There was his master, how tall and strong! what work he did, and what a nice, nice home he had! The boy thought of the mother there, and then of his own mother—of the comforts of the one, the weakness of the other; and as he thought, the big tear would start to his eye, soon to be brushed away, as he resolved to be a man, and then he'd help his mother better.

It was good he had a master who would hear, and patiently too, the story of his resolutions. And from that employer he gained much strength. He felt the power of kindly sympathy, and he knew how good were words of loving counsel to his tried spirit. At night, when he returned, though sorely tired, yet did he go home with new strength; not of the body, it is true; but in his heart he felt more fit to bear his burden than he did when he went forth to work.

His master was a man of strong, sound sense; skilful in his dealings with the young. He had learned from the Great Teacher, and had learned his lesson well. With such a man, all children feel at home, and will reveal their inmost selves; tell all their wants, their hopes and fears, and by him will be led to the great Source of goodness, truth, and love. So was it with this boy. Between his master and the other men he saw a difference, which he understood not, but which he much enjoyed, and soon he caught his master's tone. His manly truth and honesty he loved, and loving, sought to imitate. I know not how it was, but soon this lad began to think of Christ. All that he heard of him he loved, and thought him like his master. The boy was shy of speaking to his master of him, but at length it came out; and to his joy he found that Christ was living still; nay, that his master knew him, and regarded him as his best Friend. A new source of sympathy was thus raised, and fresh matter for contemplation was afforded. One night, 'twas as the winter was fast coming on, his master walked beside him, and in the darkness, as they went along, he told him the old, old story, of the young man Joseph. He told him of old Jacob's love, and how the brethren loved him not. How they did seek to kill him, and at length did sell him as a slave. But though his brethren hated him, yet did his Maker love him, and watch over him, and safely bring him into Egypt. There

was Joseph prospered; in his prosperity was tempted, and did stand true to his God, whilst disobeying his own master's wife. Unjustly put in prison, yet by his God was not forsaken; but found favour among all those with whom he had to do; and in a few years he was raised lord over all the land.

This story to the boy was new, and much he liked it. It was joy to him to think that the Great God did care for boys, and wished that they should care for him. It was to him the good seed: in his honest heart it bore much fruit; and, though the boy's lot still was hard, yet did he live a joyous life, because he now could feel his Maker's love.

Reader, this is but a type of many a boy in Ragged Schools. Speak, then, the word of kindness to all; but above all, try to lead them to the feet of Jesus.

ALFRED WHYMPER.

THE LIVERPOOL SHOEBLACKS.

THE annual meeting of this society was held in Hope Hall, and the boys who are members of the shoeblack brigade were treated to a substantial tea in the lower room. The boys appeared in their scarlet tunics, with their respective numbers affixed. After tea a public meeting was held in the large hall, and the boys were ranged in three seats in front of the platform. The band belonging to the brigade was stationed in the gallery, and performed a number of pieces in very good style, showing the improvement that has taken place since last year.

The chair was occupied by the Mayor (Mr. E. Whitley).

Mr. CHARLES PEERS, the hon. secretary, read the annual report of the committee, from which it appeared that at the close of the previous year there remained on the books of the institution 60 boys, and there had been admitted during the year 323, making together 383. Of those, there had been placed in situations, 37; training ship, 5; royal navy, 3; restored to parents, 15; discharged, 91; left of their own accord, 172; remaining on the books, 60. The unsettled character of the boys, and the disorderly habits contracted at a very early age, caused them to feel keenly the restraint and discipline they were obliged to undergo in order to train them as useful members of society; consequently the number of boys who were discharged or left of their own accord must always be large in an institution of this kind. An increased number of boys had been restored to their parents this year. The Committee continued to receive satisfactory reports of those who had obtained situations through the influence of the society, and they were glad to mention that Captain Groome, of the training ship *Indefatigable*, reported favourably of the boys received on board that ship from this institution. Through the liberality of some friends, the committee were again enabled in the summer to take the boys an excursion to Bromborough. The Evening School had been a source of great advantage to the boys, and the engagement of Mr. F. A. Emidy, the bandmaster, to instruct the boys in music, in which they had made considerable progress, had been of great assistance in their training. The committee had much pleasure in stating that, through the generosity of a few kind friends, they had been enabled to fit up a

room with a library, and provide games for those living in the Home, and they had every reason to believe that this has been attended with very beneficial results. The committee acknowledged the efficient manner in which the superintendent, Mr. T. F. Winstanley, had acted in the general management of the institution, and other friends who had assisted them in carrying out the objects of the society. The amount of subscriptions and donations showed an increase of £31 10s., the total sum being £243 17s. 8d., against £212 7s. 8d. received the previous year. There had been an increase in the money received from the boys for the use of uniforms, boxes, brushes, and blacking. The whole expenditure of the year amounted to £500 3s., leaving a balance due to the treasurer of £10 11s. 2d. The earnings of the boys during the year had amounted to £653 10s. 5d.

The MAYOR said that he must be permitted to refer to the great pleasure which he felt in occupying the chair that evening, and to say that among the many institutions of the town there was not one which, taking its objects into consideration, had higher claims upon the sympathy and support of the public than that whose claims they had met on that occasion to advocate. The object of the society was, first of all, to rescue the poorest boys from the vice and misery in which they were accustomed to live, and to train them up to such habits of industry as would tend to raise their position in society. He need scarcely tell those who lived in such a large town as Liverpool that the question before them was one of the most difficult problems of the days in which they lived, and that it was occupying the attention of statesmen, ministers of religion, and all the gifted men who had at heart the interests of this great country. This question was how they were to provide for this class of the population of their large towns, and to raise them in their own estimation and in the estimation of their fellow-townsmen, and how to educate and fit them for the great business of life. The object of that society was to lay hold of those boys and bring them under salutary discipline and order, and to make them conscious of the duties they had to discharge in this life. It was of the greatest importance that the boys themselves should acquire those habits of truthfulness, honesty, and industry, without which nobody could hope to succeed in life, and it was of immense value to the community that those who were in happier circumstances in life should give those lads a helping hand, and endeavour to show them that though in many instances they had no parents, or, in other cases, parents who had forgotten the duties devolving upon them, they should be taught that so long as they conducted themselves properly they would have friends around them who would not allow them to perish for lack of aid. Boys who were thrown upon the streets of a town like Liverpool, without the means of obtaining a livelihood, would inevitably fall into habits of vice, and bring themselves within prison walls, unless a similar society to that under whose auspices they were assembled was ready to give them a prompt and willing assistance. It was of great importance indeed, that a society which took charge of these boys should be supported, as they sought to make them feel that if only honest and industrious themselves they would have friends who would endeavour to provide them with situations, and see that they were taken care of in after life. In his opinion, the proper way to treat these boys was to show them sympathy and kindness, as there were few who could resist these sentiments if they were shown to them in a generous manner. In looking at the success of the society he could not help congratulating the committee upon the success which they had already achieved. When they considered the class from which those boys were taken, it might be considered a great work indeed, that, through the instrumentality of that society, 240 boys had been placed in

situations within the space of five years. Upon these grounds he asked them to give the society their earnest and willing support. He was one of those who believed that in education, as in other matters, a great deal more was to be gained by voluntary than by compulsory education. He had been told within the last few days that it was somewhat dangerous to talk on the subject of compulsory education. He had been told that he knew nothing about it, and that when he talked about compulsory education he confounded it with an educational rate-in-aid. He now begged to say that he did no such thing, but that when speaking on the subject a few evenings ago he was only dealing with a division of the subject of which the Right Hon. Robert Lowe had treated a few days previously. He was well enough aware that compulsory education and a rate in aid of education were two very different things; but with regard to compulsory education he could not fail to see that there were great difficulties in the way, and he had not yet seen how they were to be got over, and among these difficulties was the question whether the parent was to be punished for not sending his boy to school, or whether the boy was to be sent to prison for not going to school. He was persuaded of this, however, that if they could by any means induce boys to go to school for better motives it would be far better for them, and they would be much more likely to improve the advantages they received than by any means of compulsion. One means of educating the young, which was not sufficiently tried in large towns, was evening schools, of which he could speak with some degree of authority, as he had considerable experience in a school of that class, which had increased from an attendance of two or three in a night to about a hundred young men or boys, who had thus been able to educate themselves so as to be fit for the great business of life. His conviction was that if Evening Schools were well conducted, and if gentlemen who had the time would only take an interest in them, he was quite sure that even by evening schools a vast amount of good might be done by drawing within their walls a great number who would thus receive a sufficient education for the discharge of the necessary duties of daily life. He congratulated the committee on the amount of good they had done hitherto, and said that the report they had just heard ought to encourage them to renewed efforts on behalf of the boys who were the objects of their care. He concluded by exhorting the boys of the brigade to strive by their honesty, integrity, and truthfulness, to show some return to those gentlemen who had devoted so much care, so much anxiety, and so much money, to the furtherance of their welfare.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN THE DEVIL'S ACRE.

THE last Sunday afternoon in February, during the Speke panic, we visited a district which lies under the shadow of Westminster Abbey, and which is known by the name of the "Devil's Acre." Terrible as is this appellation, the foul dens, many of which could tell tales of horror, and the lives of too many of its denizens, warrant its employment. For if of any place in this great Babel of ours it may be rightly reported "where Satan's seat is," it is pre-eminently the case with the dens and hovels on the south side of Victoria Street, Westminster. Thanks to Ragged Schools and kindred gospel machinery for the reclamation of young and old, many of these poor

wanderers have been dragged out of this moral slime, or the place would be a very Sodom, without even a Lot to mourn over its moral darkness.

Amongst other Sunday Ragged Schools, we visited two, each of which included seventy scholars; each had a staff of four teachers, thus giving seventeen scholars to each class. The work of these earnest evangelists was, as might be expected, no sinecure; and some of the teachers seemed to be physically exhausted by their contention with their unruly flocks. But happily, impelled by love of souls, they did not give up their task in disgust because other professed disciples of our common Lord imitated the Merozites, and "came not up to the help of the Lord."

But it may be said, Why not appeal for help to the neighbouring churches and chapels? This has been done over and over again, but with one exception, it was like speaking to a dead man. This honourable exception is that of the Rev. Samuel Martin, whose congregation supplies teachers to three of the largest Ragged Schools—or "Ichabod" might be inscribed on their doors. Well will it be for the visible Church when that is considered the most prosperous community which best succeeds in evangelizing our social outlaws, and so helps to fill heaven with the richest trophies of redeeming grace!

Painful as was the spectacle *inside* our Ragged Schools, the scenes *outside* made us ask,—Are we really living in a civilized, not to say a Christian, country? For in Old Pye Street and the alleys which intersect it, we noticed many groups of young men dressed either in velveteen or faded finery, occupied, when not cursing or shouting, or at horse-play, in gambling. The bull-neck, curving like that of a snake—the long fingers, never still, but perpetually clutching at an invisible something, and the furtive eye, which, so to speak, saw without looking—all proclaimed their calling to be that of thieves. Some we knew had been in prison, and those who had not, equally deserved it. Yet there they were, unmolested by the police, evidently kings of the Devil's Acre. Now the thought occurred, Could not a *Juvenile Thieves' Class* be established here? and if so, we ask, Will not some true servant of Christ try the experiment? If so, he will but imitate his Divine Master, for the last man Christ saved on the Cross was a robber; and happily many of this class have been saved in these last days. One, for example, once a noted burglar, is now a powerful preacher of the Gospel.

Near these groups of juvenile thieves, we noticed knots of men, a few shaved and clean, but most as dirty as grimy faces and foul linen could make them. They were sitting, or rather lounging, on their doorsteps; their wives, if wives they were, turning the curbstone into a chair. Most were with all their might smoking, certainly not the narcotic weed of Virginia, but some filthy herb, out of black foul-smelling pipes, which tainted the very air. Many of these were deep in the Sunday newspaper, in many cases reading it aloud to their more unlettered neighbours, whilst others were discussing the then unravelled Speke mystery, and saying, in grotesque defence of their district, "Why, what should we kill him for?" In the midst of this debate, the bells of the old Abbey rang out clear, but they awoke no heavenward aspiration in souls whose heaven consisted in eating and drinking to the full. For said these modern pagans, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

Yet painful as were these specimens of a Sunday Afternoon in the Devil's Acre—the most saddening scene of all was that of groups of elder girls, too

numerous to count, *playing at shuttlecock*. Many of these were brazen-faced girls, whose language was as frightful as their manners. In fact, it was difficult to decide which were the worst, the groups of roughs, or these abandoned girls. Yet these are to become the future mothers of the Devil's Acre, and as such, will become disseminators of that worst of poisons, moral poison, far and wide.

But I was most surprised to notice large groups of little girls—more in number than those in our schools—playing in the street. Unlike the older girls, they were of an age not beyond control; and hence we might have expected to have seen them on the infants' gallery listening to the story of Him whose special delight is to fold the lambs in his bosom. Yet there they were outside, shouting and laughing and wielding the battledore; and being educated in vice both by voice and ear before they knew its meaning or its penalty. Those, indeed, who were not playing at shuttlecock, had invaded the sweetmeat shops, which seemed to do a roaring trade on this sacred day. In fact, one woman said, that she "sold more sweets on a Sunday than during the rest of the week." Street-life is at all times a sad thing, but surely it is the saddest of all when infants are being trained in the devil's school.

But supposing the first group and the third, the juvenile thieves, and the brazen-faced girls, had come to our Ragged Schools, this question remains, Could they have been *admitted?* Those which were well manned were crowded to overflowing, whilst the remaining two, which could have received double the number present, found it no easy task to manage those already admitted. We may well then say, from what can be seen any fine Sunday afternoon in the Devil's Acre:—The harvest is ripe for the sickle, but *where* are the reapers?

Need we add, that this Sunday Afternoon in the Devil's Acre caused inexpressible sadness. For we saw, as in a ghastly vision, the fearful doom of its thieves and idlers, if not rescued by Christian love. But we also saw another vision, the despair of those self-indulgent Christians, who at the last Great Assize shall hear these words, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me." May both visions be falsified by Christian men and women being led to do the Lord's work, and to do it *at once!*

Q IN THE CORNER.

Poet's Corner.

NOTHING IS LOST.

WHERE is the snow?
'Tis not long ago
It covered the earth with a veil of white.
We heard not its footsteps soft and light,
Yet there it was in the morning bright;
Now it hath vanished away from sight.
Not a trace remains
In fields or lanes.

Where is the frost?
They are gone and lost—
The forms of beauty last night it made.
With pictures rare were windows arrayed.
"Be silent," it said; the brook obeyed.
Yet silence and pictures all did fade.
At the smile of the sun
All was undone.

Where is the rain?
Pattering it came,
Dancing along with a merry sound.
A grassy bed in the fields it found;
Each drop came on the roof with a bound.
Where is the rain? It hath left the ground.
What good hath it done,
Gone away so soon?

Ever, ever
Our best endeavour
Seemeth to fall like the melted snow.
We work out our thought wisely and slow;
The seed we sow, but it will not grow.
Our hopes, our resolves—where do they go?
What doth remain?
Memory and pain.

Nothing is lost—
No snow nor frost
That come to enrich the earth again.
We thank them when the ripening grain
Is waving over the hill and plain,
And the pleasant rain springs from earth again.
All endeth in good—
Water and food.

Never despair;
Disappointment bear.
Though hope seemeth vain, be patient still;
Thy good intents God doth fulfil.
Thy hand is weak; His powerful will
Is finishing thy life-work still.
The good endeavour
Is lost!—ah! never.

Teachers' Column.

UNCONVERTED TEACHERS.

Two gentlemen, in company with the late Rev. Robert Hall, of Bristol, were discussing the question, Can a man of no religion be a successful minister of the Gospel? Surprise was expressed that Mr. Hall remained silent. "Sir," said he, at length, "I would not deny that a sermon from a bad man may sometimes do good;

but the general question does not admit of an argument. Is it at all probable, that he who is a willing servant of Satan, will fight against him with all his might? and if not, what success can be rationally expected?"

We think that this powerful answer of the great preacher equally applies to unconverted Ragged School teachers, if such there be. For how can any one, we will not say conscientiously, but with *power*, point the young to Jesus, who only know of his grace by *hearsay*? To say the least, they can never echo the language of Paul, while speaking to their class, "I KNOW in whom I have believed." And thus they would be as dumbfounded as a teacher was when a child asked him, "Teacher, are you saved?"

It is doubtless possible that the Holy Spirit may make use of unconverted teachers to point to Jesus, just as a scaffold may be employed in erecting a palace, of which it forms no part. Yet who would be contented to be merely used as a kind of scaffolding to build up the palace of God, and when it is completed, to be flung away into that outer darkness where all moral rubbish will be ultimately cast.

See then that you speak to your school or class as those who have "been with Jesus." For, as example is more eloquent than precept, many children will thereby be led to Jesus, and thus your pathway to glory will be illumined with redeemed souls.

HOW TO SECURE SUCCESS.

WE commend the following earnest appeal from the South-west Auxiliary Sunday School Union, to every Ragged School teacher:—

"In the success which has been granted to many earnest teachers we would rejoice, and in view of the work yet to be done, would 'thank God, and take courage'; but, that success may be more general, and failure less frequent, we venture to call your attention to the necessity for cultivating and attaining *teaching power*. To know the truth as it is in Jesus is assuredly our first requisite, but the power to present that truth in the most forcible and attractive manner is certainly second only in importance to an acquaintance with the truth itself. And we may ask, Is it probable that the ability to impart instruction will be ours unless we give some attention to the mode and style of our teaching? Can we expect to fix sacred lessons in youthful hearts, without considering the best manner in which to present those lessons? The day-school teacher studies for years how to instruct wisely and successfully; can we expect to be proficient in imparting spiritual instruction unless we cultivate the power to teach?

The constant fluctuations observable in our schools may, in no small degree, be traced directly or indirectly to a lack of *personal influence*, which a greater ability to teach will secure, whilst many who remain year after year under instruction appear to make little advance in religious knowledge and apparently derive little benefit from our labours.

The evil influences abroad in the world which specially affect the young are not wanting in power to reach the mind and touch the heart. How important, therefore, that each arrow in our quiver should be duly sharpened, that it may become an arrow of conviction, and every seed in our basket carefully sown, that it may bring forth fruit unto holiness!

'Your facts are presented as if they were fiction, our fiction as if it were fact,' said a noted actor of a former age to a minister of the Gospel, who complained of the little influence his preaching had in comparison with the other's playing. Might not the same remark be applied to the manner in which the precious truths of God's Word are presented by many of us who are teachers? Would there be so much listlessness, inattention, and spiritual dulness in our classes, so many absentees and wanderers from our schools, were every servant of the Lord 'apt to teach,'—able to present the soul-stirring truths of our Holy Gospel in a

soul-stirring manner to the minds of the young?

Let not conscious imperfection in this respect deter or drive us from the work. If true Christians, we can do all things, Christ strengthening us. As our employment is noble, our responsibility great, our difficulties numerous, let us bring to the work nothing less than all our powers of mind and heart, and not be satisfied with our efforts until we can honestly feel we have done our best.

Do you ask in what this power to teach consists, and *how* it may be acquired? We reply—*First*, by the constant, careful, and prayerful study of Holy Scripture, by which alone we can be thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

Second, by an ever widening and deepening experience of divine truth in our own souls, obtained by abiding communion with 'the True Vine,' through whom alone as branches we can bring forth much fruit.

Thirdly. Let every lesson be carefully, personally, prayerfully prepared, arranged in the manner most likely to engage the attention and convey to the heart of the scholar those truths which make wise unto salvation.

Lastly. Let us not be indifferent to the manner in which these duly prepared subjects are presented, but having faithfully studied how to teach, let us strive by judicious questioning, by suitable illustration, and above all by the earnest appeal of a warm and loving heart, to fasten the truth we love as a 'nail in a sure place.' Thus our scholars will be really the wiser and better for our labours; we ourselves be richer in known results, and our Father in heaven glorified by the 'much fruit' of an abundant Sabbath-school harvest."

Children's Gallery.

HAPPY NANCY.

THERE once lived in an old brown cottage, a solitary woman. She was some thirty years of age, tended her little garden, knit and spun for a living. She was known everywhere, from village to village, by the name of "Happy Nancy." She had no money, no friends, no relatives; and was half blind, quite lame, and very crooked. There was no comeliness in her, and yet there in that homely, deformed body, the great God who loves to bring strength out of weakness had set his royal seal.

"Well, Nancy, singing again," would the chance visitor say, as he stopped at her door.

"Oh, yes, I'm for ever at it."

"I wish you'd tell me your secret, Nancy—you are all alone, you work hard, you have nothing very pleasant surrounding you; what is the reason you're so happy?"

"Perhaps it's because I haven't got anybody but God," replied the good creature, looking up. "You see, rich folks like you depend upon their families and their houses; they've got to think of their business, of their wives and children, and then they're always mighty afraid of troubles ahead. I ain't got anything to trouble myself about, you see, cause I leave it all to the Lord. I think, 'Well, if he can keep this great world in such good order, the sun rolling day after day, and the stars a shining night after night; make my garden things come up just the same, season after season, he can sartainly take care of such a poor simple thing as I am; and so, you see, I leave all to the Lord, and the Lord takes care of me."

"Well, but, Nancy, suppose a frost should come after your fruit trees are all in blossom, and your little plants out, suppose—"

"But I don't suppose; I never can suppose; I don't want to suppose, except that the Lord will do everything right. That's what makes you people unhappy; you're all the time supposing. Now, why can't you wait till the suppose comes, as I do, and then make the best of it?"

"Ah! Nancy, it's pretty certain you'll get to heaven, while many of us with all our worldly wisdom will have to stay out."

"There you are at it again," said Nancy, shaking her head, "always looking out for some black cloud. Why, if I was you, I'd keep the devil at arm's length, instead of taking him right into my heart—he'll do you a desperate sight of mischief."

Our Library Table.

The Straight Road. London: Partridge.

SINCE the time that Bunyan wrote his inimitable parable, many writers have tried their hands at religious allegory. To do this successfully requires the pen of a master—one who is not only deep in experience of human nature in its unrenewed and its converted state, but one who can give point to his lessons with all the unction of a poet. Hence it it is no wonder that the bulk of allegorists have failed, and thus that the "Pilgrim's Progress" remains alone of its class.

The allegory before us is written by an earnest Ragged School teacher who labours in the far east. The fact that his "Straight Road" has exhausted one edition, shows how his parable has awakened the interest of his readers. The goal, even the palace of the Great Prince, is kept steadily in view, and the incidents spring naturally the one out of the other. When we say that the profits of this edition will be given to the Ragged Schools attached to the mother Church of Whitechapel we need say no more to lead our readers to purchase it.

Words of Consolation. By the Author of "Homely Readings." London: Macintosh.

THIS little work gives an epitome of all that is needed to give Christian consolation in the hour of trial. As such it is especially adapted for the use of those who visit the houses of the poor, especially in time of sickness. Printed in good and bold type, it is peculiarly adapted for gifts to the aged poor.

As showing the style, we reprint a sketch under the title of "Happy Nancy" in our "Children's Gallery."

Correspondence.

DESTITUTE CHILDREN'S DINNER SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—I have read your account of the origin and progress of the Destitute Children's Dinner Society, in the February number of your Magazine, with great interest; but would remark, that there is one portion of the article which conveys rather a wrong impression, and which I feel ought to be placed in a perfectly clear light—I allude to that portion referring to the munificent gift of the Countess de Noailles, from which it would appear the society took its origin. The real facts are as follows:—In the year 1864,

the Baroness Meyer de Rothschild had the experiment of feeding the poor children in connexion with Ragged Schools, with meat dinners at regular intervals, tried at the Tothill Street Ragged Schools, Westminster. The success of this movement having exceeded the expectation of the promoters, a fund entitled the Ragged Children's Dinner Fund was opened to carry on the work. After this had been working successfully for three years, its managers were consulted about their method of working by the ladies to whom the Countess de Noailles had entrusted her donation of £500 for feeding the poor children, more especially in the Ragged Schools of Chelsea; at the same time the originator of the Ragged Children's Dinner Fund had given instructions to have the movement extended at her own expense to three other schools. On this, the meeting was held, at which it was determined to found the Destitute Children's Dinner Society, which has now extended its operations to all parts of London, and has between thirty and forty dining rooms at regular work. If you can find space for this explanation, you will much oblige,

Your obedient servant,

WM. FULLER, *Treasurer*,
Destitute Children's Dinner Society.

February 21st, 1868.

Notices of Meetings.

CARR STREET.

On Thursday, March 3, the seventeenth annual meeting of the friends, &c., of this school was held in the Stepney Meeting Schoolroom. Mr. Henry Green occupied the chair.

After the usual preliminaries, Mr. J. W. TAIT, the secretary, read the report, which stated that during the past year the schoolroom had been enlarged in accordance with a suggestion made at the last meeting. A new lease of the premises had been secured at a cost of £257 18s. 10d., towards which contributions amounting to £101 15s. 7d., and promises not yet paid, £22 15s., had been made. A promise of £50 had been received from the Ragged School Union toward the cost of the alterations. The average daily attendance at the schools during the year was near 254; highest attendance, 330; being an increase on the average attendance of 112. In the Day School there had been an average of 108, or 7 short of the preceding year. The attendances at the Sabbath School have averaged 74 in the morning, 198 in the afternoon, and 301 in the evening. As regarded the Penny Bank's operations, the Committee reported that during the year £375 had been deposited in 10,440 deposits. The Library was in a very flourishing condition; the Band of Hope Society and the Girls' Industrial School being in the same condition. The report also detailed the Christmas festivities (which have already appeared in our columns). After a passing allusion to the decease of Mr. Thomas Scrutton, the report concluded with an earnest exhortation on behalf of increased efforts on the part of the friends in support of movement. The treasurer's account showed a small balance against the school.

The CHAIRMAN, in the course of a short speech, referred to the benefits ragged schools conferred on the poorer portion of

the community; remarking that, doubtless, were it not for the Carr Street Ragged School the scholars would have grown up in ignorance and vice. He was pleased with the healthy state of the schools, as set forth in the report, and concluded by advocating its claims on the audience.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. J. Kennedy, R. Lewis, B. Longwell, and T. Stephenson, and by Messrs. Scrutton and Curtis.

LAMB AND FLAG COURT.

Recently, on Sunday morning, about 500 of the poorer classes assembled in the new building adjoining the Lamb and Flag Schools, Clerkenwell Green, for the purpose of partaking of a breakfast, which was provided for them out of a general fund raised for that purpose over the metropolis.

The company sat down to a substantial meal of bread-and-butter, tea and cake, after which they proceeded to one of the upper rooms, where several gentlemen were waiting to address them.

A hymn having been sung and prayer offered,

The CHAIRMAN, Mr. T. B. Smithies, rose and said he was sure they had enjoyed the breakfast that morning, and were glad they had been presented with tickets; but yet there was something far better to be obtained—a ticket for a much better place; there was a heaven for every one of them. He entreated them to think of that, for it was a blessed truth—Jesus Christ died as much for the poor as the rich, and the gospel was sent especially for the poor. He would bespeak their kind attention to those who would address them that morning, and he might remark that the first person who would address them had taken a deep interest in the poor of the country, and perhaps there was no one who was more deeply interested in them.

Mr. BARTIN said he came among them as a brother, but he did not know that he had anything particular to say to them. Their worthy chairman had spoken to them of the power of sympathy, and it was due to the sympathy felt for them by their friends, that they had enjoyed that bountiful repast that morning. Sympathy could be shown by everyone, and even a child could do some good by its means. He saw a motto on the wall of the room, "The Lord is our strength, a very present help in the time of trouble," and he would ask them to take that motto home in their hearts, and ponder over it. They had all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; they were all by nature children of wrath, but those who called upon Christ from their hearts, he would hear, and make them children of his grace, for God had not appointed them unto wrath, but had shown them the way of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. There was no other means of salvation, and there was no other name given under heaven whereby men could be saved. He desired in his heart that every one at that meeting might begin a new year in the right way, and that when they had lived to the end of it, if they should be spared so long, it would be the best year of their lives. Simple indeed was the way of salvation, for it was obtained by repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ. The apostle, in a few words, summed up the substance of the Christian religion, as he apprehended, namely, faith, hope, and charity, but the greatest of those was charity. He urged upon them the necessity of repentance, for those who repented should in no wise be cast away; and they should also show sympathy and charity one towards another. In concluding the speaker entreated his hearers to seek Christ that day and believe in him, and assured them if they did so they would be happy not only in this world but in the world to come, for the record that God had given of his Son was, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life."

Suitable addresses were also given by Messrs. Watts, Saltar, Brooks, James Curtis, and Wilson.

Papers, Original and Selected.

HOW PARISHES FINE RAGGED SCHOOLS.

CONSIDERING the way in which Ragged Schools have aided the parishes, not only in curbing the unruly, but in lessening the expense caused by pauperism, we should have inferred that, from sheer gratitude, they would have done their utmost to reduce the cost of our Poor Schools. For to say the least, we should never have expected to record the painful fact that they now FINE, rather than help, our Schools. We use the term "fine" advisedly, for if parochial taxation be not a fine—in other words "a mulct, or pecuniary punishment," as the word is defined by Dr. Johnson—on voluntary working and voluntary giving, we are at a loss to know what other name it deserves. Now we have often heard of fines for *wrong*-doing, but to fine persons for *well*-doing was left to be included in the list of those wonderful discoveries which were reserved for the nineteenth century.

But, unhappily, the parish mind—so quaintly symbolized by Dickens' Bumble the Beadle—is rarely broad in its views, or large in its sympathies. It usually looks at the local expenses rather than at the general welfare. Hence the primary object of faithful parish officials, is so to increase the area of taxation, as to diminish the average house taxation.

It is this anxiety to reduce the average taxation which doubtless has led parish officers so eagerly to avail themselves of the judgment of the House of Lords in the now celebrated appeal case of "Jones and others *v.* The Mersey Dock and Harbour Company." By this judgment—as interpreted by the Court of Queen's Bench—the Poor Law of Queen Elizabeth was construed as rendering rateable for the relief of the poor, all schools which are not held in or under a church or chapel. Need we say that, if this Act were intended by its originators to include Poor or Ragged Schools—an inference which we deny at the outset—it is strange that it should have been allowed to slumber for nearly 300 years. But the sleeping serpent has at last been woke up by the voice of a

legal magician; and we fear that in some cases its sting will be deadly.

That there may be no mistake as to the doctrine of the Court of Queen's Bench, we cite the judgment given by that profound lawyer Mr. Justice Blackburn. He said, speaking for himself and his brother judges—"We are *unanimously* of opinion that all buildings of a charitable or eleemosynary character *must* be rated in future to the relief of the poor." This opinion was avowedly based on the decision given by the House of Lords in the case of the Mersey Dock Company. Thus, strange to say, a Ragged School from which no pecuniary profit is derived, is placed on the same footing as a trading company which solely exists for the pecuniary benefit of its shareholders. As regards trading companies, no exception can be taken to this decision, for they are worked solely for profit, and therefore may properly be expected to contribute to local expenses. But, though there is no analogy between the object of the directors of trading companies and those which impel the managers of Ragged Schools to their arduous labours, yet acting on this decision, the Parish officials have ever since been engaged in the ignoble work of *fining* those who contribute both time and money to lessen the burdens of society.

Now were Ragged Schools or other Poor Schools profitable to the managers, there would be some reason why they should contribute their share to the cost of pauperism—much of it *hereditary*. But the very reverse is the case. For what do the managers obtain by their onerous task, save great anxiety and hard work, and that at no slight pecuniary sacrifice? Now by our machinery, we save the parishes from the cost of many a pauper; nay, we do much to check the growth of pauperism. For it is not too much to affirm that thousands would now be revelling in parish relief, had it not been for the habits of prudence and forethought which have been developed in Ragged Schools. Nor need we point to the diminution in juvenile crime, as the result of our labours—the fact being as much admitted by the public as any algebraic axiom.

But our case would be incomplete did we not refer to the question as it concerns British, National, and other Schools receiving Government aid. It is somewhat startling to learn the sums contributed by the friends of the education of the working-class, as contra-distinguished from that destitute or criminal class which is our own special sphere of labour. Thus, by a Parliamentary return just issued, it appears that the agricultural coun-

ties had schools containing 195,000 scholars, that the average amount of school-pence paid by the scholar was 6s. 7½d., and the average amount of voluntary subscription 9s. 5½d.; making a total of £64,000 from scholars, and £92,000 from voluntary subscribers. In the manufacturing districts the average school-pence was 9s. 4¾d., and the private subscriptions 5s. 5d.; making a total of £100,256 from scholars, and £57,810 from contributors. In the mixed districts the average school-pence was 7s. 10¾d., and of the voluntary subscriptions 8s. 8½d.; making a total of £74,625 from scholars, and £82,259 from contributors. This made a grand total of £238,881 for school-pence, and of £232,069 for voluntary contributions. And yet these schools—or rather the subscribers—are to be fined by the parishes, and that at a time when there is such an outcry for the further extension of national education, and a cry for greater Parliamentary aid. Into the *pros* and *cons* of that question we shall not enter; but at the same time we cannot refrain from pointing out a glaring absurdity—namely, that whilst many educationists are asking for increased Parliamentary grants, the parishes are actually taking money from funds contributed solely for education. In the case, then, of increased Government grants leading to the establishment of more schools, the parishes would, in the shape of school taxation, really be subsidised out of funds given for secular training.

But, leaving National and British Schools, which, as receivers of money from national taxation, are in a better position to pay towards parish taxation than our Schools, we will glance at the sums contributed to Ragged Schools. As the figures of provincial Ragged Schools are not accessible, our notice must be restricted to the Schools affiliated to the Ragged School Union. Now what was the aggregated sum contributed to the London Ragged Schools in 1866-67? The total sum so voluntarily subscribed was no less than £15,320. But to this sum must be added the subscriptions to the Central Society, amounting to £4,537; which gives a general total of nearly £20,000 as voluntary taxation for the London Ragged Schools in one year.

Yet notwithstanding this large sum, many Ragged Schools are so much crippled in their finances, that were it not for the annual and special grants of the Central Society, they must cease their great battle with social vice and misery. Thus, last year, sixty-six Ragged Schools, economically conducted though they be, reported an aggregate debt of £2,287. Now surely it is enough to work

and give, without being borne down by the difficulty found in meeting current expenses, to say nothing of the parochial fines now imposed.

But if our Ragged Schools were crippled by debt *without* parochial taxation, it needs no great stretch of imagination to infer what their fate must be now that they are subject to a parish fine. As it is proverbially the "last straw which breaks the camel's back," so we fear that the death-warrant of many a valuable but poorly supported Ragged School will be signed thereby. Our only hope is, that by increased subscriptions, or by an immediate alteration in the law of poor-law rating, this catastrophe will be averted.

That we are not exaggerating the evil influence of this fine, a few cases will show. Thus the last Report of Field Lane Ragged School states that, "By the present interpretation of the law, we have been rendered liable to parochial taxation, adding £150 (!!) to our annual expenditure." Thus this old and valuable institution has been fined, simply because it strives to socialize and save our social outlaws. So the well-worked Lamb and Flag Ragged School has been rated on an assessment of £20 per annum; whilst the Ragged School in Church Place, Paddington, has been assessed or fined in the sum of £9 16s. 2d. The list is not exhausted; but they are selected merely as specimens of how the parishes are fining Christian workers for doing a work which society cannot do for itself. Well, then, may the Committee of Brook Street School, while protesting against the rate at which they are assessed, point to "the injustice of a law which enforces the payment of poor-rates on an institution whose sole object is to benefit the lowest class, by prevention and reformation, and to save from destitution and crime those who would probably become a considerable expense to the country."

Many efforts have been made to remedy this pressing evil, but as yet all has been in vain. As a last resource, an influential deputation, consisting of representatives of every religious denomination, waited in March last on the Prime Minister; but though there was much *talk*, any official expression of opinion was evaded, and so nothing was achieved. Nor do we believe, with the pressure of the parish authorities on the Poor Law Board, anything will be done to place our Ragged Schools on a proper footing as respects parochial taxation, unless the potent voice of the public is heard above the voice of officials, who, anxious to reduce the average

house taxation, cannot or will not see what the repression of crime will ultimately cost.

At the coming election there will, doubtless, be many cries, and the great battle of the "ins and the outs" will be vigorously fought. But surely there is another cry which, in the interest of poor starving children, we may submit at the hustings—namely, NO TAXATION OF RAGGED SCHOOLS! Let, then, every candidate be thus tested, and we doubt not that we shall have to record that the first act of a reformed Parliament was to free Ragged Schools from the fine levied on their managers for striving to socialize and to save the children of the destitute and the outlaw.

THE STREET-BOY.

THE waif or street-boy is thus photographed by the *Boys' Magazine*:—The waif is the street-boy who is thrown entirely on his own resources; whose wits are sharpened on the pavement; and who is as ignorant of a father's experience or a mother's love as he is of a feather bed or tub night. He is the rank growth of squalid poverty, and his life is a battle for bread; but the elasticity of youth preserves him from the dull apathy or the chilly moroseness which overcomes the aged: there is about him a joviality which is not to be damped by the moistest weather, or frozen by the coldest wind.

He is a beggar, of course, and his aspect is that of utter destitution, so far as unshod feet and highly ventilated garments can represent that unfortunate condition. His professional avocations include sweeping a crossing, holding a horse, lending a hand with a truck, and doing a wheel. But, apart from these engagements, he relies mainly on the charitable instincts of human nature; and in the arts of the mendicant he takes honours. Does he not know how to ply the ear of the elderly lady in puce silk with the affecting story of mother at home ill of a fever, and three small children down with the measles? Does he ever fail to discover the fast young gent on the 'bus top, who jocosely flings a copper into the mud to see young Ishmael tumble? Can he not talk demurely to the steady gentleman who inquires as to his ability, and pleased with plain answers, transfers a piece of money? He is the very cunningest of boys. His shuffling run and well-enacted shiver; his pathetic appeal to the portly father of a family; his obsequious attention in opening a cab door,—are in their way triumphs of histrionic ability. I have known several of these boys, and one of them I see every day of my life.

He is a little fellow, with a head like a scrubbing-brush,—the only thing about him which suggest that important article in a rough toilet. His eyes are of Whitechapel sharpness—and like those of that locality, they have been drilled. There is a popular notion that the weasel can never be caught asleep; but I have a steady conviction that the boy to whom I allude never sleeps at all. Early in the morning he is in the street, pouncing down upon

the earliest office-bound clerk, as the early bird swoops down upon the earlier worm, imploring a penny for breakfast; last thing at night he is still in the street, rushing out upon the latest homeward bound, as a young lion seeking his prey, beseeching a penny for supper. His ostensible avocation is that of sweeping a crossing; and he comes forth armed with a broom about as tall as himself; this he seldom, if ever, employs as a besom, but uses it rather as a defensive and offensive weapon, wherewith either to defend himself from other "wild Arabs of the road," or to attack the same, if circumstances provoke open hostility. In business, this young gentleman selects his victim. He is evidently a studious observer of physiognomy. Five, six, seven individuals, upon whom, in my unsophisticated but impulsive nature, I should have made a descent, will he allow to pass. By-and-by, he sees his man, and closes. His style of play is abrupt, pertinacious, and generally successful. Unlike many of his tribe, he indulges in no variety.

He begins by gravely touching his forehead with the first finger of his left hand, bows his head, saying,—

"Give me a penny."

"I have nothing for you."

"Do give me a penny."

No answer.

"Do give me *one* penny——"

"Be off."

"I shan't have nothing to eat till I gets it (which is very probable). Do give me a penny."

"Come, run away!"

"Do give me a penny, and I won't ask you no more for a fortnight!"

"I have not any coppers."

"Never mind; I'll run and get change."

"Get away, I tell you."

"Do feel for a penny,—do, now,—do, do, do!"

These repetitions are given in a most imploring accent, and accompanied by a short hurried run: the appeal generally succeeds; the money is handed over or flung on the ground; and, at once, with an abbreviated "thankee," the youngster shoulders his broom, and dashes up the middle of the road on the look-out for another victim.

I have several times had some conversation with this interesting specimen of the waif. Shy at first of departing from his formulæ, he at last became, to some extent, confidential. "Where do I live? Well! down Mudge's Row, of course, at the back of old Bilberry's the cooper's. Which is Mudge's Row? Well, of course, Mudge's Row is right up again the beer'us in Vickery Street which turns out of Denby Lane. Who belongs to me? Well, father, I suppose; he licks me. Got no mother? No; went and died ever so long ago. No brothers and sisters? No, and don't want none. What does my father do? Well, he drinks, smokes, and swears, and kicks up a bobbery. Would not I like to be a nice respectable boy? Don't know—never tried—guess I shouldn't. How much do I get in a day? Well, eighteen pence and scmetimes one and ninepence. Do give me a penny!"

Habits of restraint are particularly objectionable to the waif. Without realising a sum at all approaching to my friend of the broom, or the sum he

chose to name, they are content with a few scanty coppers and liberty. Liberty to lounge by the water-side among the barges and the floating timber. Liberty to paddle in the mud, and to watch with curiosity and hope of profit, the emptyings of a reeking sewer. Liberty to lie huddled up in a muddy corner in the wet, or a sunny corner in the dry. Liberty in summer time to go bounding after pleasure-vans *en route* for Hampton Court or elsewhere, and to become so many harmless revolvers, to the great enjoyment of the holiday folks. Liberty in foggy November to shout madly and flash links wildly; and liberty in snowy January to sweep door-steps, clearing away the snow with broom and shovel. Liberty at night—fortune favouring—to visit some attractive "gaff," and grow enthusiastic and uproarious with delight as the "world wonder Mr. Tuppenny Buster" sings his indescribable comic song—with an irresistible chorus—and dances the clog hornpipe, "as performed before the Emperor of all the Russias."

The liberty enjoyed by the Waif has its penalties. He knows too well what it is to gaze wistfully into a baker's shop without a penny to buy bread; he knows what it is, on Sundays, to scent the dinners that are borne along in triumph by happier boys—goose with sage and onion that makes the chill wind warm and savoury; baked joints with potatoes all hot and steaming in the simmering gravy; and pies that would sharpen up an appetite that had not been already keenly sharpened by long fast. The Waif knows and feels these things. He knows, too, what it is to go shuddering, shivering, through the streets to the Night Refuge—and to find it full; to the workhouse door—and to find it closed; to crouch in a doorway, snatching a few morsels of sleep on the cold stone, and to be roughly wakened out of that slumber by the voice of authority—"Move on!" *Whither?*

There can be no doubt about the fact, and to my mind the fact is very singular, that many of these Waifs are honest. The young thieves are of another stamp, although it often happens that the outcast boy, pressed by want, sorely tempted by experienced hands, and having no fear of the "pleaseman" before his eyes, enters on a career of crime, and compels society, that tacitly refused to have anything to do with him while honest, to lodge, feed, clothe, and instruct him, as a thief.

But it does not always happen that the honest Waif is neglected. Such an insinuation would be a gross injustice to the benevolence of the public. There are several Refuges in our great metropolis where the Waif, fished out from the eddying stream of poverty and vice, is dried and made wholesome.

VISIT TO A LOFT.

It is the custom of the London City Missionaries, when visiting in their districts, to commence with the first house in the street or alley; and in this they begin with the room on the ground floor, which is generally down in some damp and noisome cellar, and so on from storey to storey, till they reach the garret above. It so happened, while one of the missionaries was thus proceeding in his usual course, he reached the last room, as he thought at the top of the house (for between the roof of the house and the garret there

is usually a loft, in which pigeons are kept), and was about to go down again, when his attention was drawn to a ladder, set against the wall, over which there was a trap-door, through which he perceived daylight above. At first he thought it was only one of these pigeon-lofts, but lest he might be deceived, and leave some poor creature unvisited, he mounted the ladder, and lifted up the trap-door.

Truly it was a loft, and nothing more than a loft; but instead of being tenanted by pigeons, there, upon the floor, lay a little girl, whose bedding was a scanty layer of straw, and whose clothing was a piece of an old carpet. She looked very pale and ill, and took but little notice of the unexpected visitor. He drew near her, and asked her whether she was ill. In a faint voice, she told him she was. He said, "My child, where is your mother?"

She replied, "I have no mother; she has been dead long since."

He said, "And have you no father?"

"Yes," she answered; "I have a father, but he goes out early in the morning to Covent Garden Market, with vegetables, and does not come back till evening."

He asked her whether she was not very unhappy and lonely all the day long without her father.

She replied, "No; I would rather my father were not here, for he swears and uses dreadful words, and that makes me sad."

"And how do you know," said the missionary, "that it is wicked to swear—where were you taught this?"

"Oh," said the child, "I went to a Sunday School before we came to London, and there I was taught that swearers go to hell."

And then the missionary asked her a great many more questions, and he found, to his unutterable joy, that she had not only been taught the truth as it is in Jesus, and been instructed in the way to heaven, but that she had *received* that truth into her *heart*, and was really *in* that way which leadeth to eternal life. He did all he could to comfort the poor sufferer; and then promised to come to see her again in a few days.

He was as good as his word, for in a day or two afterwards he was climbing up that ladder, on his way to the poor desolate little girl, who truly was desolate and forlorn, as far as this world was concerned, but had been found by the Good Shepherd, and folded as one of his lambs with his "little flock."

And there she was lying in the same place, on the same bed, with the same piece of old carpet upon her.

But that place was the chamber of death; that bed was her bier, and that tattered carpet was her winding-sheet. All was hushed in silence; the body of clay was left behind, but the spirit had fled to its Saviour; angels had carried it up into the abodes of bliss.

SERVANTS OF ALL WORK CLASS.

One of our Lady Superintendents, says the *Missing Link* Magazine, thus writes of a class for girls which she holds in her Mission Room:—

Yesterday evening we had our long-promised Girls' Tea Party—girls belonging to the Sewing Class whom I have invited also for Sunday reading. They go out as servants by day, or are hired to clean steps, windows, &c.

but are at home to sleep. We teach them to mend and make their clothes, and instruct them from God's Word how they may best fulfil their duty; first as servants, then as wives and mothers; and in many instances our labour has not been in vain.

We frequently get them out into permanent places from this class. It is a good recommendation to them to have attended it, and several have turned out very well, and given much satisfaction to their employers. We have more situations offered us than we can fill. Two of these girls came on New Year's Day to receive a dress as a reward for having kept in their situations over twelve months.

At half-past five last evening twenty-four of them came to tea, had as much bread-and-butter as they wished for, and nearly half a pound of cake; this they did as they liked with, as it is often a treat to save a piece for some sister or brother at home. We give it them in one slice, and then all share alike, and there is no temptation offered to pocket any for the sake of getting more. After tea we amused them with missionary pictures. They sang some hymns, and I spoke to them about coming to Jesus. One dear girl came to me quietly when I had finished talking to them, and said—

> "I was a wandering sheep; I did not love the fold;
> I did not love my Shepherd's voice; I would not be controlled."

"And is Jesus your Shepherd now?"

"Yes. I came to Jesus on the night of the last tea-party: all my sins were washed away that evening, and I have been so happy ever since. It was while you were talking to us of the parable of the lost sheep."

I had heard a whisper of this before; but it was only last night she had the courage to confess herself on the Lord's side. She is in a respectable woman's family as nurse girl. Her mistress speaks very highly of her; and her mother and stepfather have several times said to me, "What an altered girl our L—— is, ma'am, since she came to the Mission Class."

Our last tea-party was about eight or nine months since; so I ought to be stirred up to continue patiently this part of our work, though it is often wearing to strength and patience; *but strength equal to my day is always given me.*

Our girls save up their money by our means for clothes, and thus we keep them neat in their dress.

M.T.

PRIZE SCHOLARS' MEETING.

On Tuesday, April 7th, the Fifteenth Annual Prize Scholars' Meeting was held in Exeter Hall. In the absence of the Earl of Shaftesbury, Joseph Payne, Esq., presided. Amongst those present, we noticed Lady A. E. Campbell, the Hon. Mrs. Arden, Sir R. W. Carden, Revs. R. H. Atherton, R. Berry, H. Bewley, J. M. Brown, E. A. Bull, J. Crombie, J. Lockhart, F. C. Moran, H. Newton, R. Parkins, T. Scott, Dr. Cross, Dr. Cumming; Captain Gardiner; Messrs. Travers Buxton, H. Doulton, J. St. Quintin, &c., &c.

After refreshments, Joseph Payne, Esq., took the chair, and called upon the Rev. E. A. Bull to engage in prayer.

Mr. GENT, the Secretary, then read the following letter from Lord Shaftesbury, which explained the cause of this his first absence from this happy gathering:—

HYERES, *April 4th*, 1868.

MY DEAR GENT,—Untoward circumstances have compelled a delay of my journey for a few days. Few things could have annoyed me more than to be obliged to forego my annual treat of distributing prizes to the Ragged School Children.

It has ever been to me a special delight; and seeing that, at my time of life, I cannot hope for many more, I am very loth to lose a single one.

Pray give my love to them all, and assure them and their teachers that I never orget them night nor day.

May God's blessing rest on the whole.

Yours truly,

SHAFTESBURY.

Mr. Gent then made the following statement:—

The present is the Fifteenth Annual Distribution of Prizes by the Committee of the Ragged School Union to those young persons who, having been scholars in Ragged Schools, are now gaining honest self-support by persevering self-effort. The prizes consist of a beautiful card printed in colours, well fitted to ornament the walls of the child's home, and may be looked upon with pleasurable feelings by the members of the family. Those who come up for the first time on this occasion also take a sum of seven shillings and sixpence, while to those who have in former years taken prizes, will, in addition to the card, but instead of money, be presented with a book, the publishing price of which is seven shillings and sixpence. None are eligible for these prizes but those who were scholars in the school before they became servants, and having become servants, have served one employer without change of place, for at least twelve months, and for that period at least, the character must be unexceptionable. A few other conditions have been laid down for the guidance of the teacher, and for securing the welfare of the servants. In past years the average number of prizes was 580, but the number awarded for the distribution this evening is 681, or 100 in advance of the ordinary average, and 146 over the number of last year. The number of applicants for prizes this year was 759, but on a careful scrutiny, 78 from various reasons failed in complying with the whole of the conditions; the increase in the number of prizes has not arisen from any alteration of the rules, or from any relaxation in the application of the rules; but it is hoped from an increase of effort on the part of the servant to give satisfaction to the employer. That satisfaction has been expressed when required, and the result is a large increase in the number of prizes successfully claimed. It was noticed at the last distribution, that on that occasion, for the first time, the girls outnumbered the boys, and the girls this evening have an increasing majority. Last year they were 23 ahead, but now they are 43 in excess of the boys; the total number of boys is 319, and of girls 362; of these, 188 have in previous years taken prizes, 14 of them take the prize for the third time, 9 take it for the fourth time, and 3 for the fifth time, which is the largest number anyone can gain them. These young people have held their situations without change from one to nine years, viz:—

378	. . . . .	from 1 to 2 years.
175	. . . . .	„ 2 „ 3 „
89	. . . . .	„ 3 „ 4 „
24	. . . . .	„ 4 „ 5 „
15	. . . . .	„ 5 „ 9 „

By the rules none under 12 years would be eligible for a prize, and none older than 18 years. On an examination of their papers it was found that—

81	were from . .	12 to 13 years of age.
154	„ . .	13 „ 14 „
157	„ . .	14 „ 15 „
135	„ . .	15 „ 16 „
89	„ . .	16 „ 17 „
65	„ . .	17 „ 18 „

The Committee have been induced to continue these prizes from a conviction that they tend to form moral character, encourage patient industry, and elicit respectful manners; and therefore, although the expense is somewhat considerable, the Committee hope it is a good investment of the funds placed at their disposal. It is only right to add that a third of the money prize is paid from local resources. It is difficult to ascertain the number of scholars that yearly enter the industrial bustle of life from the Ragged Schools; but the number must be large, from the circumstance that as many as 681 have complied with the prize-conditions, and this number is perhaps not a tithe of the whole entering upon the active duties of life. One schoo reports that 52 scholars in the year have entered situations, and that 4 have gained the prizes. Another states that many boys and 58 girls have been sent out from school to situations during the year, and that 6 girls and 4 boys have obtained the prize; and a third that 67 of the scholars have obtained situations—5 have just received prizes. "If one in ten that enter on the duties of life are here to-night as prize-holders, it may be asked, Where are the nine?" and we reply, that as far as we know, the nine are struggling for position, and hope in due time to put in an appearance on some future occasion like the present; and if they fail, the effort to rise is of some worth to them. Although they have not succeeded to the full extent, they are each filling their little niche in Society, and it is hoped the better able to fill that niche by the kindly aid given, and Christian influence that was brought to bear upon them when in the Ragged School, and which, in many cases, ceases not to be exerted when the scholar becomes a servant.

Mr. J. Payne then addressed the Prize scholars in one of those inimitable speeches wherein, as usual, he exemplified the dictum of Thomas Hood, "it is good to be merry *and* wise, which is better than being *other*wise." Mr. Payne concluded his address by reading the following lines, forming the 2,368th of those tail-pieces for which he is so famous:—

Raise ye the Ragged School Banner on high,
Let it be seen in Philanthropy's sky,
Over the Ragged School *Union* unfurl'd,
Gracing the cause that is blessing the world!

Made by the active, and borne by the good,
Years above twenty its fame has stood;
Showing this *motto* to great and to small—
"*While we have time, let us do good to all!*"

Ye who have come for your Prizes to-night,
Ragged School Servants with characters bright;
While you behold its gay colours aloft,
Sing to it, *cling* to it, *bring* to it oft!

Striving to strengthen, and seeking to save,
Christians, be diligent, earnest, and brave;
Keeping the wants of the Ragged in view,
Look for them, *book* for them, *cook* for them too!

"*Dinners* for Children" are sensible things,
From them much bodily benefit springs;
By them much moral advantage is won,
Carefully, prayerfully, bid them go on!

Health to Lord Shaftesbury, man of renown,
Worthy of wearing the Ragged School crown;
Oh, that he now could among us appear!
Would not we give him a thundering cheer? *

Health to friend Miller, whose talent and skill,
Plan with intelligence, work with good will;
Drawing and painting, and showing to-day,
Sights of great beauty, and *nothing to pay!*

Hearty in spirit, and clever in speech,
Able the minds of the youngest to reach,
Doing them good without making a fuss,
This is the MILLER to grind food for us.

Mr. W. H. MILLER, a member of the Central Committee, and Honorary Superintendent of Doughty Street Ragged School, then kindly gave an entertainment entitled "A Journey from the North Pole to the Children's Summer Festival in Petersham Park, and Home by Rail in the Evening." This lecture was illustrated by paintings 12 feet by 8 feet, which were painted by Mr. Miller expressly for this gathering. We but echo the general opinion when we indicate that these illustrations were singularly beautiful, and that both in conception and execution they would have done credit to a professional artist of repute. We need not then add, that as they were gradually unfolded, they drew hearty plaudits from the visitors.

But how can we adequately describe the lecture itself? So versatile is Mr. Miller, that he seemed to be half a dozen persons rather than one. Thus he displayed the united talents of an orator, a singer, a mimic, and a poet, and that to a remarkable degree. As the various scenes of the panorama he had painted came into view, he described them, sometimes by jokes, ofttimes by lyric, sometimes by telling anecdotes, and not rarely by donning the appropriate costume, and by acting the scene to the very life.

* The response to this question consisted of hearty and ringing cheers, showing how they would have received him had he been present.

We think that the gem of this entertainment was his photograph of the Annual Excursion of the Ragged School Union. Life-like as was the painting, his descriptions were not less true to the life. For, by speech and by action he represented all the merry pranks and *abandon* which make up a child-holiday. But it would require the pen of an experienced reporter to reproduce all that Mr. Miller said and did at that happy meeting. Suffice it to say, that during the hour and half the entertainment lasted, Mr. Miller administered great draughts of laughing-gas to his auditors, even the seniors becoming boys and girls for the occasion. Yet the lecture was not all fun, but had its moral, which, if followed, will make all who heard it wiser and better men. Need we say, that at the conclusion, Mr. Miller was heartily cheered, and received the grateful thanks of all, both young and old, for his unique lecture.

Two friends of Mr. Miller accompanied the lecture on the piano and flute, and added much to the pleasure of the evening. During the evening the Prize scholars sang several favourite hymns. This happy Annual Meeting of waifs and strays who have been rescued from vice and poverty then closed with the Doxology and Benediction.

THE LITTLE GIPSY.

It was a beautiful summer Sabbath morning some years ago when I started from the town, in company with a few friends, to conduct a village Sunday School. With hearts refreshed by prayer, and minds musing on the sacred duties of the day, we travelled on in peace and joyfulness. This sacred tranquillity was not destroyed, but rather heightened, by the scenes of natural beauty through which we passed. The glorious sun was rising in the fulness of his power, and lighting up with splendour the scenery of earth, while the trees around us where clothed with verdure, and formed a retreat for multitudes of feathered choristers from which they warbled forth their Maker's praise. The members of our little party were filled with admiration of these beautiful sights and sounds, and one of their number could not but think that if the abode of sinful beings is so rich and fair, how much more so must be that heavenly world which is the dwelling-place of God and his people, and so sighed for that *brighter*, that *better* land.

Our near approach to the scene of labour became evident from the number of ruddy-faced children we saw hastening in one direction; the end of our journey, the little chapel, was soon reached, and we entered at once on the duties of the day. The simple hymn, the unadorned address, and humble prayer, were as usual the precedents of class instruction.

We had not been long engaged in our work, when my attention was drawn to a girl of interesting appearance, who had just entered the room. I soon perceived that she was a stranger, so I took her by the hand and entered into conversation with her. She was a gipsy girl, she said, and had come from the camp just down the lane, for her mother had sent her to school to-day.

"And does your mother often send you to school?" I said.

"No, sir, I have never been to school before."

"Can you read?" I asked; to which question she with artless simplicity replied; "I don't know, sir, I never tried!"

I reached a book, and found that she did not know what it was, and that she could not tell a single letter of the alphabet. I then questioned her, to ascertain what religious knowledge she possessed, and sad indeed was the result. She knew nothing of the Bible, had never heard the name of Christ, and had never been told that there were eternal worlds of happiness and woe. She had heard her mother mention the name of God, but who or what he was, she could not tell! This seemed to me so awful an instance of heathenish ignorance in a Christian land, that I gladly embraced the opportunity of holding up the torch of truth, and shedding the light of Christian knowledge into the dark recesses of an immortal mind. I talked to her about our Father, God, and told her in simple language the wonderful story of Christ and our salvation. I thought I discovered deep interest depicted in her countenance, and saw her eyes brighten somewhat with intelligent delight. I informed her how she too might share the Saviour's love, and taught her how she might daily make known her wants to Him who cares for the weakest worm.

At the close of school hours, I gave her some tracts to carry to her tent, and took a reluctant leave of her, but not before she had promised to practise daily prayer. I followed her in my thoughts and prayers, and imagined I saw the promise fulfilled, and her knees for the first time bent in prayer, and her heart for the first time lifted up to God.

On earth I probably shall never hear anything more of this poor gipsy girl. I have frequently thought on what she *may* be, but cannot tell what she *is;* but this I have ever felt, that it would have been worthy of an angel's power to have been permitted, as I was, to be the first to communicate to an immortal soul a knowledge of Christ and the way of salvation. Though the extensive establishment of Sunday and Ragged Schools renders such instances of extreme ignorance rare, yet is not every teacher engaged in a kindred work? for how few of our scholars know the truth, and how fewer still know it to their soul's salvation!

J. A. C.

HOW WILL IT END?

In his "Story of Jonah," Dr. Raleigh has the following remarks, in which he calls the serious attention of Dives to the claims of Lazarus, who is dying at his doorway:—We may well think, as we sit and look at the city, *what a stupendous power a city has*—power for good and power for evil. It is natural to think now of its power for evil, its power to breed sin from less to more, from more to greater still, until it fills the city as the ocean fills its bed, and rises up from it in black and murky shadows, such as mountains never cast, and threatening the very light of the stars. We dwell in a great city—the greatest in the world, the greatest in any age. What a stupendous power this city has to be one thing or the other; to be partly one thing and partly another! What forces lie in her bosom—some of them latent, but most of them active. What patriot, what Christian, will not lament with heavy and

dolorous sorrow the strength and increase of the great sin-force of this city of our habitation! The "violence" of Nineveh would not be suffered in it. The vices of the Cities of the Plain, or some of them, would be hunted out of public sight as men hunt wild beasts. But for all that, the terrible sin-breeding force is active and fruitful in a hundred ways. A luxury as enervating as that of Babylon is lolling or revelling in too many of her great houses. Impurities like those of Corinth, stain, and consume while they stain, large portions of her society. A flippancy like that of Athens rules the most pretentious and popular parts of her literature. The selfishness of Cain walks the streets of London, saying all day long, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The rapacious greed of Ahab works along her line of commerce. The folly of the worst fools of old still laughs in her giddy, godless multitudes, who say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

I know the salt of the earth is here, working as potently in this great city as anywhere in the world. But the thing to be salted is wide and deep. Worlds upon worlds of human life and interest are within this city. When you touch one world, you are far from another. The resistance of sin is terrible. The putrescence of sin is swift. Are we gaining or losing? That is the awful question. Is the salt arresting the decay, and nourishing the springs of life? Or is the decay eating up the salt?

If we are gaining, although it may be very little, so little as to be often imperceptible, then there is life for the great city in the future, and hope for England, whose deepest roots and springs are here. If we are losing—losing here, and in the other great cities of the land, where the pulse of national life beats most strongly and most symptomatically of the nation's state—then *all* is being lost. The nation's life is ebbing. The judgments of God are mustering unseen, and—supposing the process of degeneracy unchecked—will expand themselves in swift calamities, or by slow decays, until London, with her sister cities of England, shall have passed away like so many cities once "great to God," now little more than shades and names in human history.

THE ROB ROY PRIZES.

The Rob Roy Prizes consist of 100 Prizes each of a sovereign and a bronze medal for boys leaving the Training Ships, *Chichester*, in the Thames; *Indefatigable*, in the Mersey; and *Havannah*, in the Severn. A certain number of candidates will be selected by the boys of each ship, and the managers of the ship will adjudge the prizes to those of them whose industry and conduct are most deserving when they leave the ship during the next five years to enter as sailor-boys in the Royal or commercial navy. The prizes are provided by the author's profits from "The Voyage Alone in the Yawl *Rob Roy*," and we are informed that a lecture on the subject of the voyage, illustrated by diagrams, dresses, &c., will be given by Mr. J. Macgregor, on May 7th, at St. George's Hall, Langham Place. The Earl of Shaftesbury will preside, and the proceeds are devoted to the Shoeblacks' (Central) New House. Tickets may be had at the office of the Ragged School Union.

Poet's Corner.

LIVE FOR GOD!

Live, live for God,
And toil a world to save;
Live, live for God,
Nor heed the coming grave!
The time, the place, the way,
He knows them all;
Do well thy work to-day,
And wait His call.

FINISH THY WORK.

Finish thy work; the time is short,
The sun is in the west.
The night is coming down; till then
Think not of rest.

Yes, finish *all* thy work, then rest;
Till then, rest never:
The rest prepared for thee by God
Is rest for ever.

Finish thy work, then wipe thy brow,
Ungird thee from thy toil;
Take breath, and from each weary limb
Shake off the soil.

Finish thy work, then sit thee down
On some celestial hill,
And of its strength-reviving air
Take thou thy fill.

Finish thy work, then go in peace,
Life's battle fought and won;
Hear from the throne the Master's voice,
"Well done, well done!"

Finish thy work, then take thy harp,
Give praise to God above;
Sing a new song of endless joy
And heavenly love.

Give thanks to Him who held thee up
In all thy path below,
Who made thee faithful unto death,
And crowns thee now.

Teachers' Column.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

THERE is something for *all* to do.

One can bake a loaf of bread; another can carry it to a starving child.

One can make a coat; another can find a shivering form that needs it.

One can give of their substance; another, who has nothing to give, can go to those who have, and assist them in their distribution.

One can preach; another can get the people out to hear him.

One can visit the sick; another can comfort the sad.

One can say kind words; another can give good counsel.

One can comfort the mourners; another can weep with those who weep.

One can pray for blessings; another can say "Amen" to his petition.

One can teach a child to read God's Word; another can instruct a class in the Ragged School.

One can plan work and select workers; another can execute the enterprise that has been planned.

One can go forth into the "regions beyond" to spread the glad tidings; another can sound out the Word of the Lord while he remains at home.

One can write a tract; another can pay for printing ten thousand copies. A hundred others, who may have neither ability to write nor money to print, can take them and distribute them in ten thousand families in different localities.

One can speak to the wayfarer the words of everlasting life; another can drop a tract in the path of a stranger, thus sowing a seed for the harvest day.

All can do a little, and some can do much. God alone can give the increase, and that he waits to do.

The greatest thing, the first thing, the last thing, the most important thing, we can *all do*—we can all PRAY! Let us do this as a preparation for every other duty, and God will hear and bless us. "Go, work this day in my vineyard"—and see that you cultivate your own *special* plot.

BE PERSONAL.

WHEN I first took a Sunday School class, I feared to be personal with my pupils, to talk pointedly to each scholar before the rest. My teachers had never talked to me thus, and I was afraid of offending by too close questions and too practical application of the truth. I soon found such sowing brought forth little fruit. The scholars gained in general knowledge, but they did not feel, "That is meant for *me*." They did not turn to Christ.

One day, after prayerful consideration of the subject, I said, "Boys, it is no use for us to be afraid of each other; I came here to try and show you the way to heaven; you come to learn it, do you not? Then we must get so that we can talk as naturally about Christ or our own hearts as about our studies and our play. So do not be afraid of my close questions. You will have to get used to them; but they won't hurt you: you may question me, too."

At first some answered promptly when asked home questions; others blushed, and turned their heads away. But ere long the restraint wore off, and nearly all could talk easily. The means, I trust, though humble, were blessed. Soon my heart was cheered by a gracious awakening among my pupils. Before a year had passed, nearly all were rejoicing in a Saviour's love. Now no questions could be too close.

A new scholar came into the class, who was not used to such teaching, and did not like it. After a few Sabbaths, he said to a class-mate, "I do not like so many

questions about myself; I do not like to answer them. What shall I do?"

"Oh, you'll have to *learn to like* them. That's the only way you can get rid of them. That's the way the rest of us did. Now, the closer the questions the better; they make us *think* so much more. I don't know as I should ever have turned to Christ if it had not been for such questions."

Fellow-teachers, let us *be personal*. Make each pupil feel, at every lesson, "That is for *me*. Christ died for *me*. He calls *me*. He is knocking at the door of *my* heart."

Children's Gallery.

OF WHAT USE AM I?

A PARABLE.

"Of what use am I?" thought a little sunbeam; "it is as well that I should withdraw my light; why should God have made such a poor feeble sunbeam as I am?" But after a while better thoughts came into its mind, and it said, "God must have made the weakest and feeblest for some use, and if I try and do what I can, it will please him."

So it shone with all its might through the glossy leaves of a banyan tree, under which a little copper-coloured child was crying with hunger and weariness. It had been forsaken by its heathen mother. The little toddy-bird in the tree over its head was more feeling than she, for it was flying back and forth to its curious nest, carefully feeding its young. But the child's attention was arrested at the sight of the sunbeam dancing on the glossy plumage of a parrot, and it clapped its little hands and laughed. The sunbeam saw it, and went away with a happier heart.

The little sunbeam then tried what good it could do on the ocean. So it shone brighter than ever, and the waves sparkled in its light. A young lady on board a vessel, who had left her home and friends to go and teach the poor heathen children about their Father in heaven, saw it, and was comforted. So the sunbeam went away. It had done its errand there.

"Mother," said a poor, pale, sick boy, "please to open the shutter, and let in that stray sunbeam which has come to cheer me with its presence." The sunbeam heard the words, and did its best to cheer him.

It now entered a home where poverty dwelt, and comforted the heart of the lone one who was wearily using her needle. Her heart was drooping, but when she caught sight of the sunbeam, hope revived, for he thought, "God gives his light to this little sunbeam, and he surely will not leave me in darkness."

It next found its way into a beautiful and costly mansion, where wealth and luxury dwelt. "There can be nothing but happiness here," said the sunbeam, and it was about to withdraw, when it was drawn back by a low moan. Within there lay a suffering invalid, and, though surrounded by all the luxuries that life could enjoy, she was not happy. She felt she was going to die. The sunbeam fell across her couch. She thought of the verse, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." She cast herself on Christ. Her burden fell.

Thus it went on from day to day, doing what good it could, and never again was heard to ask, "Of what use am I?—*Written for little folks, by a Girl eleven years old.*

HOW A POLICEMAN CAPTURED THE RAGGED BOYS.

A NEW YORK policeman had a good many bad boys in his district, and how do you think he undertook to mend their ways? Not by shaking his heavy club over their ears, or taking them to the police-court, or threatening them with the "lock-up."

What did he do? He bought *picture-books* and showed them. There were pictures of the great giant David killed, of the bears which ate up the children who called names, and of God calling little Samuel. The boys were poor, ragged, ignorant little fellows, and never saw such pictures before, and of course they asked all sorts of questions about them. Their curiosity was excited. And how did the policeman answer them? He hired a room and got some teachers, and then he asked the boys to come there next Sunday and *hear* about those pictures. The boys went, and they had a Sunday School; and I should not wonder if it was the best and pleasantest time the boys ever had in their lives. Besides, it gave them something good to think of all the week.

Next Sabbath they went again, and the good policeman and his friends had more to tell them. They heard about God and his dear Son Jesus Christ, whom he sent down from heaven to be the Friend and Saviour of just such boys as they were.

And what do you think the boys call Mr. Lyon? for that is the policeman's name. They used to call him names, I dare say. They now say "Pap Lyon," and they try to behave as good children ought to.

Editor's Note-book.

A COLUMN OF SOCIAL STATISTICS.

I. INTOXICANTS AND DEATH.

OF the number of deaths which occur in England and Wales from excessive drinking only an imperfect conception can be formed. But it appears, according to the returns of the Registrar-General, that in the ten years 1856-65, no less than 4,922 deaths were directly ascribed to *delirium tremens*, and 3,238 to intemperance; the deaths from the two forms of alcholism being 8,160, or on an average 816 per annum. High temperature probably increases thirst, and at the same time renders the action of alcholic liquors more dangerous; for *delirium tremens* is much more fatal in the hot than in the cold months of the year. The results, observes the *British Medical Journal*, extending over a period of twenty years, show that while the deaths ascribed to intemperance were equally distributed, the deaths by *delirium tremens* were distributed over the four quarters unequally; the smaller number occurring in winter, the greatest in summer. The effect of the alcohol and the heat in producing *delirium tremens* is greatest at the age from forty to sixty; but it is also apparent at the earlier age of twenty to forty.

The number of deaths directly ascribed to excessive drinking in each of the years 1856-65, in England and Wales, to 100,000 of population was 3·7, 4·0, 3·7, 4·6, 3·9, 3·3, 3·5, 4·1, 5·2, and 5·0 respectively. In 1856 alcoholism was the cause of 216 out of every 100,000 of the total deaths. The proportional number of deaths from this cause to 100,000 of population was 4·6 per annum in the five years 1850-54; 4.1 per annum in the five years 1855-59; and 4·0 per annum in the five years 1860-64. In London, the number of deaths in the ten years 1854-63 was 2,181—viz., 1,292 from *delirium tremens* and 889 from intemperance. In each of the three years 1864-6 the deaths in London were 242, 243, and 215.

II. Vagrancy.

The number of vagrants receiving Poor-law relief in England and Wales in 1867 was 5,027 on the 1st of January—3,566 in-door relief and 1,461 out-door; on the 1st of July it was 5,248—3,854 in-door and 1,394 out-door. The flow of vagrants into the metropolis is very strong.

The following statement shows the number of vagrants relieved in each of the 11 divisions of England on the 1st of July last; and for conveniently comparing them we place after the name of each division the number of the population as enumerated at the census of 1861:—The metropolis (2,802,367), 1,573 vagrants relieved; the south-eastern division, (1,805,534), 443 vagrants; south-midland (1,295,152), 280; eastern (1,142,230), 103; south-western (1,833,074), 122; west midland (2,434,614), 589; north midland (1,287,972), 139; north-western (2,923,487), 740; Yorkshire (1,899,233), 484; northern division (1,151,332), 413; Welsh (1,311,109), 362. The average for the whole kingdom is about 264 vagrants relieved in a million of population. According to that average, the metropolis should have had only 740, instead of 1,573.

III. Insane Paupers.

The annual statistics of pauper insanity have been issued. The number of paupers in England and Wales on the 1st of January, 1867) was 963,200, and 41,276 of them were insane paupers—namely, 30,905 lunatics, and 10,371 idiots. "Thus," says the Poor-law Board, "4·3 per cent. of the pauperism is ascribable to insanity, the lunatics being 3·2 per cent., and the idiots 1·1 per cent."

In the north-western and west-midland divisions of the kingdom the insane constitute 5 per cent. of the paupers; in the eastern division and in Wales they are only 3·3 per cent., and in the south-western division only 3·6 per cent. Very unequal also is the distribution of idiocy. In the metropolis the return shows only 666 idiots in the 138,706 paupers, while Yorkshire has 865 in even its 64,092 paupers, and the north-midland division 768 in its 55,846 paupers; the west midland division has a number of idiots (1,346) double that of the metropolis, but in a much smaller number of paupers (108,202), and Wales has 1,074 among its 79,778 paupers.

Of the 41,276 insane paupers, 18,157 were males, and 23,119 females; 23,173 were in county or borough lunatic asylums, 1,206 in hospitals or licensed houses, as many as 10,324 in workhouses, 1,005 in lodgings or boarded out, and 5,568 resided with relatives.

IV. Police in Towns.

The last annual return of the numbers of the police shows that in 1866 the police in the city of London, officers and men, were 699, being one to every 147 of the resident population. In the metropolitan police district the number was 6,839, being one to every 500 of resident population, not reckoning the 739 dock-yard police. The cost of the city police for the year was £60,123, and of the metropolitan police, £574,457.

In Liverpool the police-force was 1,100 in number, or one to every 440 inhabitants; the cost for the year was £76,844.

In Manchester the number was 674, or one to 532 inhabitants, and the cost, £41,936; in Salford, 112, or one to 1,008 inhabitants, and the cost, £7,820. In Birmingham the force was 377 strong, or one to 891, and the cost, £26,119. In Leeds, 270, or one to 845, the cost £17,675. In Sheffield, 245, or one to 891, the cost, £14,875. In Bristol, 303, or one to 540; the cost, £19,854. In Newcastle, 154, or one to 794; the cost, £12,362. In Hull, 152, or one to 692; the cost, £10,546. In many of the smaller towns, which maintain a separate force, the police are not one to 1,000 of population, and the total number is therefore inconsiderable.

The average for all England, town and country, is one to 894 of the estimated population.

These statistics supply a moral, to which

it will be well for society to give heed. For if the public will not sufficiently assist Ragged Schools, both by personal service and pecuniary aid—it must pay the penalty in increased taxation in order that paupers may be supported in Lunatic Asylums or Workhouses, and for the repression of crime. Is is not then better then by far—seeing the *moral* waste caused by pauperism and crime—to prevent rather than to punish?

Correspondence.

DESTITUTE BOYS AND THE NAVY.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—The enclosed, which is cut from the *Liverpool Mercury* of this day, will show you that the question which has been so often raised in the pages of your magazine, has at length been satisfactorily settled through the exertions of our member, Mr. S. R. Graves. Many of our readers will be aware that destitute boys have been prevented from entering her Majesty's navy in consequence of not being able to produce a certificate of their birth. The extreme hardship of this rule induced our representative, S. R. Graves, Esq., to take the matter up, and in a letter from him to the honorary secretary to the Shoeblack Society, received yesterday, he states, "The difficulty about proof of age of boys entering the service is removed. The boys' own statement of age at the time of entry will be regarded henceforth as conclusive evidence." The managers of training ships and other institutions having for their object the reformation of street boys will, no doubt, feel much indebted to this gentleman for bringing the matter before the notice of the Government.

The steps which Mr. Graves took to bring about this desirable end were occasioned by data supplied to him by Mr. C. Peers, honorary secretary of the Liverpool Shoeblack Society. It has often been placed in difficulty by the absurd restriction which the Royal Navy authorities put in the way of boys joining the navy at this and other ports.

I remain, yours truly,

W. CROSFIELD, Jun.

LIVERPOOL, *March 17th.*

ADMIRALTY HELP TO HOMELESS BOYS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—At page 23 of your magazine for January last, it was stated that twenty-two boys of the *Chichester*, who had passed their examination as seamen, were rejected by the Admiralty. Why? Strange to say, because they could not produce certificates of birth. Now many of these poor lads could not even tell where they were born, much less give any legal evidence of their age. Hence, the wisdom—or rather the *red-tapism*—of the Admiralty, decided that though they were fitted for the Royal Navy

both by taste and training, their services should not be secured by the country.

You will be glad, however, to learn that Sir J. S. Pakington and his colleagues have at last, in response to the remonstrances they have received from all parts of England, rescinded this evil custom. Thus they have decided that the captains of her Majesty's ships may legally enter boys who engage to serve in the navy until they are twenty-eight years of age, and that the statement of the boy's age, as made by himself at the time of entry, is to be considered as conclusive evidence of his age. It is desirable in all cases to obtain the consent of the parents or next relative; but such a proceeding is not necessary to a legal entry. The boy having entered the navy, either with or without such consent, is legally liable to serve until he is twenty-eight years of age, and he cannot be claimed by the father or any other relative.

This alteration in the *custom*—for happily it is not a parliamentary law—of the Admiralty is of great importance: for her Majesty's marine will now present a fit outlet for the energy of the many homeless and friendless boys who throng our Ragged Schools.

Yours, &c.,

QUARTUS.

OUTCAST BOYS AND A COLONIAL SECRETARY.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—I know you will be glad to learn how our Juvenile Reformatory and Industrial Acts are working. Under their wise provisions, so long sought by many here, homeless, friendless, wandering, endangered, means-of-livingless, as well as criminal children, of both sexes, under sixteen years of age, are now apprehended by the police, and taken charge of by the Government for a term of five years or under. The girls are at present sent to Newcastle our principal coal port, sixty miles distant from Sydney. A large and convenient building not in use for many years has been arranged for their reception, and here the work of mercy is going on. The only receptacle for boys at present, is a vessel purchased by the Government and stationed in this magnificent harbour. She is named the *Vernon*, no mean name in the lives of the British admirals. Here the lads are in training for maritime pursuits. The Government, I understand, is contemplating with much interest the establishment of farms, for the training in agricultural pursuits of a moiety of young persons coming within the meaning of these acts. How fallen is human nature!

Recently our Colonial Secretary, the Hon. Henry Parkes, invited the lads of the *Vernon* to spend the day at his residence, situated close to the line of the Western Railway, and about thirty miles from Sydney. Accompanied by some of the officers of the ship, they were landed at an early hour, and marched through the city with fife and drum to the railway terminus, and hence by rail to their destination. Clean white uniforms, blue caps, and cheerful faces, plenty of food, and plenty to do, had indeed made a wonderful metamorphosis in their appearance, to what it presented before the law

thus fathered and mothered them. After indulging in various pastimes, they were mustered in a marquee, where other guests of the Colonial Minister had also mustered, and where roast beef, plum pudding, various fruits and tarts, custards, and other niceties had been abundantly mustered also, under the careful superintendence of the minister's lady. Upon these viands all feasted to their heart's content. Cricket and other games and brief addresses followed. Then cheers for their kind entertainers. Then back to Sydney and to their ship, without accident, misbehaviour, attempt to escape, or any incident to cloud their high day.

May all concerned in it, by the Divine Saviour's grace, have a yet happier meeting in heaven!

Yours, &c.,
R. W. VANDERKISTE.

SYDNEY, N. S. WALES.

Notices of Meetings.

HINDE'S MEWS.

The twenty-eighth anniversary of the Hinde's Mews Ragged Schools, Marylebone Lane, W., was held on Wednesday evening, March 25th, 1868. Alderman Sir R. W. Carden took the chair.

The Secretary read the Report, which stated that the school was in a very flourishing condition. There is in operation, and working successfully, a Sunday Afternoon and Evening School (exclusively for Scriptural education), with an average attendance of boys and girls—80 in afternoon, and 130 in evening, conducted by voluntary teachers: a Penny Bank, which has been thirteen years in operation (the deposits for the last two years amounted to £253 6s. 1½d); a school for instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, held three evenings in the week, average attendance 33, conducted by a paid master; a Band of Hope Meeting, held twice a month, well attended; a Mothers' Meeting, held on Wednesday afternoons, conducted by Miss Douglas, average attendance 20; a Girls' Sewing Class on Wednesday evenings, conducted by voluntary teachers, average attendance 45. The Teacher's Bible Class and Prayer Meetings are both well attended.

The financial statement showed that the school commenced 1867 with a debt of £40, which, with the help of the Ragged School Union special grant of £15, they were enabled to liquidate, and close the year with a balance in hand of treasurer, £1 19s. 11d.; their receipts for two years being £168 18s. 4½d., and the expenditure £166 18s. 5½d.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. J. R. Paulton, J. R. Ross, Mr. E. J. Hytche, and Messrs. A. Wood, Heard, and Edmonds.

LANT STREET.

An interesting meeting was held in the above school on Friday, April 3rd. About 400 children and parents were present. In addition to addresses by Mr. E. J. Hytche, of the Ragged School Union, and Mr. Taylor, the school band played many favourite school pieces, to the delight of their companions and visitors.

The object of this happy gathering was to present to Mr. and Mrs. Potts and their daughter the testimonials subscribed for by the scholars as tokens o gratitude to their estimable teachers. The children kept their secret well, and out of the product of their savings, chiefly farthings, they presented Mr. Potts with

an electro-plated butter dish, and Mrs. and Miss Potts with a silver thimble and bodkin. These were presented at a meeting of the Band of Hope. It is the largest on the south side of the Thames. In addition to their other zealous labours, Mr. and Mrs. Potts have conducted it voluntarily as a labour of love for many years, to the great benefit of that degraded district.

OGLE MEWS.

On Monday evening, the twenty-fourth annual meeting of the above schools was held in the school-room. Sir R. W. Carden presided.

The Secretary read the Report, which showed a deficiency of £36 4s. 11d., and the Committee earnestly appeal for additional support. The total number of attendances at the Sunday Schools was one hundred and sixty. There were thirty scholars who were candidates for the scholars' prizes given by the Ragged School Union, to young persons for retaining the same situation twelve months. The general attendance at the Evening School for Boys was satisfactory, the average attendance being thirty-six. The Evening School for Girls has also been satisfactory, the average attendance being twenty-eight. The average attendance at the Infant School has been ninety-six, and the parents of the destitute children frequently express their grateful acknowledgments to the governess. The average number of readers at the Library was fourteen boys and twenty-five girls. There are three hundred and fifty books in the Library. The magazine department has been most successful, the scholars manifesting great interest in it. The Savings Bank is open every Monday to receive deposits from one penny to one shilling; the amount deposited is £28 6s. 3d. Many of the children have joined the Clothing Club, the object being to obtain articles of clothing at three-fourths of the original price. The Mothers' Meetings are held on Wednesday evenings; they are well attended. The Band of Hope meetings are held the first Monday in each month, with a view to promote habits of temperance amongst both the scholars and their parents; the attendance is generally good.

The thanks of the Committee are due to Sir Robert Carden for the very liberal subscriptions received from himself and family, and also to the Ragged School Union for their annual grant of £25. The total receipts amount to £253 6s. 6d., and the expenditure to £36 4s. 11d. above that amount.

The meeting was addressed by the Revs. W. Cadman, R. D. Wilson, T. Wright, and R. Godson.

ROBERT STREET.

The twenty-first annual meeting of the New Cut Ragged Schools was recently held in the Hall of the Working Men's Institute, Lower Marsh, Lambeth. There was a large attendance, particularly of women.

Lord Ebury presided. His lordship was supported by Sir R. W. Carden, Ald. J. C. Lawrence, and the Revs. R. Berry and G. M. Murphy. The report stated that the number of scholars on the books of the Boys' School was 215, and the average attendance 125. Three boys had received prizes from the Ragged School Union for retaining their situations during twelve months. The Girls' School was represented to be in a satisfactory and improving condition. There had been much sickness and poverty in the homes of the children. At the Evening School the average attendance is eighteen, most of them being young women who are engaged in business during the day. The other branches of the society's organisation—the Sabbath Schools, Bible Classes, Mothers' Meetings, and Penny Bank—were shown to have been productive of much good. Lord Ebury, in opening the proceedings, testified to the importance of Ragged School organisations, and pointed out the good the New Cut Ragged Schools, whose majority they that evening celebrated, had wrought in the Lower Marsh district of Lambeth.

Papers, Original and Selected.

SOWING AND REAPING.

It is an ancient fault to yearn for and to despond if there are no visible or immediate fruits of our labour. Yet surely it is not for those who believe that fruitage is solely from God's will, and not from man's energy, to be anxious about results, or to work merely because as a rule spiritual seed-sowing implies a harvest-home. If we labour from right motives we sow the good seed of the kingdom, solely because the Master bids; and whether the soil be flinty, or is found to be a good rich loam—we labour on because the commission of Christ still is "Occupy *till* I come."

But, happily, it seems to be God's universal law that, where there is faithful toil for Jesus, rich fruit shall not be wanting. For, though it is true that a Paul may plant and an Apollos water, yet God alone can give any increase; yet is not the converse equally true that, if Paul does not plant and Apollos refrains from watering, there will not be any increase? The increase may be less than we prayed for and yearned for, yet still a bud will burst out here, and a sweet floweret will peep out there; and the weary toiler, when he least expects it, hears the cry spring from breasts weary of sin, "Sirs, we would see Jesus." For the canon of work is not yet repealed, "as ye sow, so shall ye reap."

Yet, after all, probably the richest fruits of Christian labour will never be known until the whole of God's family meet in their Father's house. Fleshly pride, indeed, is so potent that if the *whole* harvest were reaped here, we should probably be "puffed up;" and thus work professedly for Christ would really become nothing less than a work for self. But at the "marriage supper of the Lamb," all pride will have so died out, that the saints will be able to *bear* to have the fact revealed that no prayer and no toil failed of its intended result. For in Christ's presence we shall feel that He—not the Church—was the true Harvester of souls; and thus that, though man sowed, Christ was the real reaper.

These thoughts on sowing and reaping sprang into our minds as

we reviewed the labours of the London Ragged Schools during the past year. Never, as the Annual Report fully showed, were the numbers gathered from slum and den so large; and never were the teachers, from the blessing which followed their varied efforts, so called to sing the song of harvest-home. That teaching, like preaching (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16), is, in too many cases, but a savor of death, instead of life eternal, there can be no doubt; but in the case of Ragged Schools we are grateful to know that during the past year very many of our scholars and adults were gathered into the great garner of God, and others have begun the homeward march to the Celestial City.

Our work from the first has had two phases—for our aim is both to socialise and to save. The primary object, indeed, is to Christianize; and should that aim ever lose its precedency, we may at once inscribe "Ichabod" over the doors of our Ragged Schools. Yet out of that greater object a lower one has sprung; and thus a work begun for Christ, has been found equally work for society. It is thus seen that the two-fold seed has produced a two-fold harvest. For when we regard the SOCIAL results, we may well ask if the reaper has not tracked the sower?

Thus we find that this year our prize scholars were no less than 681. This was 146 more than in 1867, and 100 more than the average of the prior fourteen years. This indicates that, with the increased population in our Schools, there is no falling off in the good servants trained in Ragged Schools. Now when we remember from what homes the bulk came, and the evil influences to which they were exposed, indoors and out of doors, we may well feel grateful to garner fruit like this. For is it too much to affirm that, for every Prize-scholar, there is one less tenant of a jail, or of a workhouse?

Then, again, glance at our Shoe-blacks, now numbering 355. It is true that mere numbers cannot indicate moral results, for it was not the ten thousand warriors who were steadfast to Gideon, but the three hundred lappers who conquered the host of Midian. But in the case of the Shoe-blacks, we know by the unerring tests to which they are subject, that the bulk are good lads and true, and thus figures tell their own tale of the moral good effected. In our peregrinations through this great city we watch them narrowly, and we find them always at their posts, and when there that they are civil and industrious. Working thus steadily—hating the very thought of "loafing,"—they harvested last year the large sum of

£7,838—thereby giving a semblance to the old provincial notion that the "London streets *are* paved with gold."

Again, what a social harvest was reaped in our Penny and Farthing Banks, when it was reported that 25,107 depositors paid in no less than £9,725. Now every farthing so saved it is not too much to intimate was saved from the sweetmeat shop, or the gin palace. In the Ragged Schools, they were practically taught the A B C of prudence, which will doubtless become a lesson for life. Even now the result has been most beneficial, for many paid their rent when out of work from the money so saved; others bought their winter stock of clothing; whilst some thereby were able to minister to the wants of relatives in the hour of sickness, or to defray funeral expenses when death invaded their homes.

But if we turn from the social to the SPIRITUAL results, we shall equally find that the sower and the reaper were one. When we regard the 31,367 scholars and the 6,305 adults in our Ragged churches—in other words, the 37,672 persons now gathered into our Ragged Schools—we are led to ask, "Is there any fruitage?" or have the teachers to ask, like the prophet of old, "Who hath believed our report?"

Here our statistics somewhat fail; even if it be possible to gauge spiritual results by statistics. Still we can point to 186 teachers who were once scholars. Some of these who were the worst of the worst, are now the best of the best. Their classes are usually models as respects order and attention, whilst their exhortations, based on their own experience of the grace of Christ, have a potency which our pens are not equal to depict.

Again, last year 45 Ragged Schools reported that 186 of their scholars had proclaimed their love to Jesus at his table. Now, remembering how our scholars are scattered in this and far distant lands, it is scarcely too much to infer that these are not a tithe of the number of those who have thus publicly given themselves to Jesus. We are led to this inference because at fifteen Old Scholars' Meetings held last year, the bulk were found to be regular attendants at public worship, and not a few stated that they were members of different churches.

We have every reason, too, to believe that our Teachers' Prayer Meetings have not been in vain. No less than 1,717 elder scholars regularly attend these means of grace; sometimes by invitation, but usually by their own desire. Some indeed meet once a week by themselves for prayer; and in those other cases, where a

teacher presides, their prayers are stated to be marked by simplicity, *directness*, and that Jacob-like faith which will take no denial.

It is thus seen that the reaper has tracked the sower like his very shadow. Nor do we doubt that richer harvests will yet be vouchsafed, if there be more of Christ, and less of self, in our work. Of the great millennial morn, it is intimated that the "Lord alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isaiah ii. 11). So must it be now if the "haughty looks of man are to be humbled." And if to this be added faith in our work and trust in the Holy Ghost, we believe that there is no mountain too great for our spiritual Zerubbabels to level.

ABSTRACT OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

In presenting the Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Parent Society of the Ragged Schools of London and its suburbs, the Committee of the Ragged School Union desire to acknowledge the continued favour of Almighty God, which they have reason to believe has been vouchsafed to them, and without which no effort, however well designed, and by whatever means carried out, can ultimately succeed. The blessing that has hitherto rested upon their efforts, they accept as an earnest of a larger good yet to be realised, the realisation of which, however, they dare not expect apart from earnest prayer, faithful effort, and combined and prolonged action.

New Schools have been opened during the past year in Lock's Fields, in Red Cross Street, in Salisbury Row, in Lansdowne Place, in Cable Street, and in Mercer Street. In these, and in the older Schools, there are 61 new operations.

The numbers of Schools and Scholars upon the Society's list just completed are: 187 School Buildings, in which are conducted 237 Sunday Schools, with an average attendance of 31,357; also 181 Day Schools, with an average attendance of 22,063; also 211 Evening Schools, with an average attendance of 9,855.

The increase in last year's number has been 1,836 Sunday Scholars, 2,737 Day Scholars, and 521 Evening School Scholars. The Society's School Agents, in their visits, pay special attention to the attendance of Day School Scholars at a Sunday School, which has aided in the gratifying result that the average attendance at the Sunday Schools is 9,290 more than at the Day Schools. The Day School Teachers, too, take a warm interest in the prosperity of the Sunday School.

It is very gratifying to find that among the voluntary teachers there is an increasing number from those who were formerly scholars in the Ragged Schools. 186 of the present volunteers have risen from the form to the chair, and are now, like a native agency, conferring upon others the blessings that have been so invaluable to them. The total number of earnest Christian volunteer workers in the Schools is 3,247.

The Bible Classes for Senior Scholars have been found fruitful fields of usefulness, not only in sustaining a prolonged connexion of the adult youth with the Schools, but in imbuing their minds with Christian principle, and gradually employing them in teaching the younger children.

The number of paid teachers has slightly increased. The number in the Day and Evening Schools a twelvemonth ago was 412, and the number now employed is 416. Of this number, 231 are in Day Schools; 157 in Evening Schools; and 28 are specially employed to teach the industrial classes. These teachers are aided by monitors, of whom 584 were employed last year.

It was stated in last year's Report that the Refuges, which had in previous years been so largely aided by the funds of this Society, had become affiliated with the Reformatory and Refuge Union, and that the number of cases in the Rufuges receiving the Capitation Grant had been reduced to 22. The Committee have decided upon paying the Capitation Grant of £3 per year towards the support of those inmates from Ragged Schools already admitted, and continuing it as long as they remain there; but not of extending it to new admissions.

The Clothing Clubs have been conducted in 82 Schools, to which has been subscribed £797 1s. 9d. by scholars, and £756 18s. 5d. by adults. Other clubs, similarly conducted, have been very usefully carried on, such as Boot and Shoe Club, Coal Club, Barrow Club, Sick Club, and Burial Club.

A good meal once a week has been considered and very generally adopted by the Schools during the past winter. In the last Report reference was made to the probability of this feeding movement being extended by the proposed formation of a Destitute Children's Dinner Fund. This was effected last year, and the Committee of this fund greatly aid the Ragged Schools by monthly grants for the purpose of supplying substantial dinners, at least weekly, to those children in most need of them.

Closely allied with this object are the efforts of the Ladies' Sanitary Association, who endeavour to promote the healthy recreation of Ragged School children in the various parks, once or twice a week, providing toys, paying for the oversight, and in other ways carrying out their beneficent schemes.

Eighty-six Schools know of 1,936 that had begun to support themselves by their own labour, and this number was only a portion of the whole that had thus gone from their Schools.

The Fifteenth Annual Distribution of the Scholars' Prizes took place on the 7th of April last, when 681 boys and girls had successfully competed for, and fairly gained, the desired reward. This number is 100 in advance of the average of the 14 preceding years, and 146 more than in the year preceding.

Old Scholars' Meetings have been held in increasing numbers. The teachers of 15 Schools have during the past year sought to gather some of those whom in past years they have taught, but who are now young men and women. It was at these meetings elicited that a large majority attend public worship, and that many are members of churches.

From the return lately furnished by the Schools, it is gratifying to find a work of grace is going on among the elder scholars, for in 45 Schools as many as 186 young people had become communicants in various churches. As a preliminary to this good work, the Teachers' Prayer Meetings, held in

nearly all the Schools, have proved most useful. To these meetings, the elder and well-disposed of the scholars have been invited, and at 120 of the Schools the average attendance at these prayer-meetings was 1,312 teachers, and 1,717 scholars.

Ragged Churches were conducted during the last year in 98 of our school-rooms, where the total average attendance of worshippers was 6,305, which gives an average at each congregation of 64 persons. The increase of the year is 7 services and 467 worshippers.

In 64 of the Schools there is an average attendance at Special Bible Classes of 1,340 youths of both sexes.

In 90 Ragged Schools Mothers' Meetings are conducted; the average attendance for the year has been 3,192, which gives an increase over last Report of 8 meetings, and of 667 members.

The Penny Banks have not only retained their useful position, but have increased from 98 to 104. The juvenile depositors numbered 5,478, and the total of their deposits for the year was £1,630 17s. 10d., and in the same period they withdrew £1,413 15s. 7d. The adults numbered 19,629, and the total of their deposits was £8,095 10s. 4d., and they withdrew £7,824 13s. 8d. The united balances at the end of the year amounted only to £487 18s. 1d.; and this, equally divided among the 25,107 depositors, would amount to a fraction less than five farthings to each.

The Bands of Hope have in the past year been very busy and very successful. There are now 39, with 2,943 members.

A new effort was commenced in one of the Schools to bring before the children and their parents the privileges of keeping to sacred uses the Lord's Day. This is entitled the Juvenile Sunday Band, with 128 youthful members, who agree "to abstain from buying, selling, or otherwise causing unnecessary labour on the Lord's Day."

In 88 Schools there are Lending Libraries, having in the aggregate 14,360 volumes, which, on an average, is 163 volumes for each of the 88 Libraries.

For the last 22 years the Committee have been distributing Bibles to the scholars of Ragged Schools. In the last year 1,440 have been supplied at a cost to the funds of £24: at this rate, and during the 22 years, the Committee have circulated 33,320 copies of the complete Word of God.

The cultivation of plants and flowers by the children and their parents, mostly as WINDOW GARDENS, has been a source of pleasure and benefit. It not only ornaments the home, but has a tendency to refine the taste and inform the mind. In many of the Schools, once during the season these plants are put in competition for prizes, and hence flower-shows are formed.

The children, too, have not been forgotten in these country excursions. A day's holiday was arranged last summer by every School possessing the means to do so, and the children were taken to breathe a freshened atmosphere. After the Schools had exhausted their means for giving this happy day once in the year, it was found that there was a residue of the Schools unable to do so. By means of a letter from Lord Shaftesbury, an appeal was made for the needful funds, and kindly responded to. The result was, that on the 16th of August 1,600 children of these otherwise overlooked Schools were taken, with sufficient teachers to take their care and superintendence, to Richmond by rail, and the day spent in Petersham Park.

The Shoe-Black Brigades have been profitably engaged during another year. There are seven of these Brigades, dividing among them the whole of the metropolis as their field of labour. Upon an average they employ 355 boys, who in last year earned £7,838 12s. 5d., which is an increase of £330 over the earnings of the year before.

The propositions for enlarging and improving "Our Children's Magazine," as named last year, was carried into effect on the 1st of January, 1868 which now forms its third series, which in size is increased from 18mo. sixteen pages and coloured wrapper, to crown 4to. of eight pages, without wrapper. The illustrations are full-size and numerous. THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION MAGAZINE is now progressing with its twentieth volume as the organ of the Society.

On the subject of Finances, 136 Schools report their year's receipts at a total of £25,760 19s. 3d., and their payments at £26,720 2s. 1d., which, on an average, shows the receipts of each School to be £189, and the payments £196, thus showing the Schools to have exceeded their year's income by £960.

The financial difficulties of the Schools is being increased by the demands of the parishes upon the Committees for the payment of poor-rates and other imposts. If Ragged Schools in any degree conferred pecuniary benefit upon the managers, little or no complaint could be made against their bearing a fair share of the public burdens; but when the object of Ragged Schools is to save the outcast and the destitute from moral evil and a career of crime, and thereby not only lessen the public expenditure for the punishment of the evil-doer, but constantly adding to the number of those that learn to do well, it does seem the reverse of good policy and sound judgment to injure the machinery by which such results are brought about.

The funds placed at the disposal of the Committee of the Union have not been quite equal to the former year, while the grants in aid of the affiliated Schools have been in excess of those of that year. The Society's resources are, therefore, reduced to the extent of £1,482. While the Committee, on the one hand, would avoid running into debt, on the other, they consider that, as long as they have resources to fall back upon, to meet all fair and proper necessities of the Schools, they should be used. The work they have in hand is not to be done by funding the public contributions, but by carefully and wisely spending them; and they find themselves and those who co-operate with them encouraged by the circumstance of an occasional legacy, coming in just at a period when it seemed most needed, and without which to all human appearance, the cause would materially suffer.

Having now brought under review the proceedings of last year, and touched upon some of the happy results of much labour, many prayers, and hearty co-operation of numerous friends to the cause, the Committee would, in conclusion, rejoice that they have for another year been permitted to aid the great work of evangelising the moral wastes of this vast metropolis. To seek and to save the lost was the mission of the Redeemer himself, and his commission to his disciples was, and still is, "Go ye unto all the world and teach the gospel to every creature"; and if London is to be evangelised, it can only be done by the gospel, that gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

PROCEEDINGS AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION,

Held at Exeter Hall, on Monday Evening, May 11th, 1868.

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G., IN THE CHAIR.

Amongst those present we noticed the Bishop of Cork; Hon. A. Kinnaird, M.P., Sir R. W. Carden; Revs. R. H. Atherton, R. Berry, W. D. Corken, G. Calthrop, W. Emery, G. O. Frost, J. Gough, McConnell Hussey, Canon Jefferson, J. Killick, J. B. Owen, G. Rose, J. H. Wilson, R. D. Wilson; Drs. Cross and Ellis; Messrs. J. Payne, John Holmes, &c.

The proceedings commenced by the Rev. J. B. Owen offering prayer, and the meeting singing

"All hail the power of Jesu's name."

Mr. J. G. GENT, the Secretary, then read the Report of the Committee, and the Balance Sheet for the past year.

The Noble CHAIRMAN said,—My very good friends, members of the Committees, superintendents and teachers of the Ragged School, you see before you to-night a living instance of the evil consequences of a man breaking through a good custom. I did not attend as was my wont at the distribution of the prizes this year. It has almost broken the habit I was in, and strange to say, I feel almost shy and uncomfortable in your presence, but, nevertheless, good sometimes comes out of evil, and good was extracted from the evil in this case, for my place was taken by that most admirable man, as you well know, the Lord Chancellor Payne, and so great was his success that I heard on all sides such a general expression of feeling, not only from the adults but specially from the children, that I felt as though I could never presume to show my face here again. I concur in their decision.

But now let me congratulate you upon the Report that you have just heard read. That Report exhibits progress; it does not exhibit such progress as you and I could desire, but nevertheless it exhibits progress, and that is far better than being stationary, for to be stationary—it may seem a contradictory statement—in a work of this sort is positively to go back.

But here we have positive progress; and upon one point I congratulate you much more than upon any other, that we have an increase in the Voluntary Teachers to the number of 186; drawn from that very class who have themselves been the subjects of the discipline of the Ragged Schools, who have risen thereby from the very depths and miseries of society, and are now come forward to heal the wounds of which they have seen and felt so much, and impart to their brethren and sisters those blessings and privileges that God in his mercy has so abundantly imparted to them. I hold this to be a matter of great rejoicing and for thankfulness to Almighty God; I hold it to be tantamount (as the Report said) to the raising up of a Native Agency. And see the benefit of this, for those who know best the miseries they have to deal with will also know best the remedies most useful for them, and those who know most of the sorrows of which they complain will be the kindest and most experienced in dealing with those sorrows we wish to heal. (Applause.) Now again I must congratulate you too upon

what the Report says of the additional zeal and energy and experience and affection exhibited by the great body of your paid teachers. I speak of them with infinite respect and affection; I maintain that the paid teacher is a labourer worthy of his hire, and there is no money payment that we can make to these paid teachers that will compensate for the affection, for the zeal, for the energy, for the heart they bring to bear upon the great work in which they are engaged, for the patience they exhibit, for the forbearance, for the gentle leading of those wayward and difficult children that are collected in our Schools. And are we to be told that to the Roman Catholic system alone we must look for self-devotion to the great works of charity and of love? I speak with no disparagement of those sisters of charity and mercy who in long black gowns perambulate our streets; I speak of them with respect, engaged as they are in works of compassion, goodness, and tenderness; but I maintain that in our own Protestant faith we have sisters of mercy to vie with them. I will undertake to say that I will find from the Ragged School narratives and biographies, those that shall vie with all the legends of the saints—all the legends that are true—I dont mean the legends that are *not* true, but with all that are true. Produce me saint this and saint that, St. Agatha and St. Ursula, and I will produce to you Mrs. Parlabeen and others, and I will undertake to say that in the competition in comparison the Protestant sisters will carry off the palm. Well now, let me speak with reverence of these people; many of them I know are working by day and by night without much hope of worldly reward and without any hope whatever of worldly praise. But although their praise be not in men's mouths, and though by name they be not mentioned upon these platforms, yet they have a reward far better. Let me quote the words of good Thomas Fuller. He said, "In the days of persecution there were many unknown persons who went to the stake or died by the hand of the executioner, whose names were never recorded in history, but," says he, "never mind that,' God's books are better than men's histories;" and so it is with those I have spoken of, God's books with them are better than men's biographies. And I thank them here, and I will thank them so long as I have breath, for the affection they have exhibited, for the care they have bestowed amongst the most destitute and down-trodden of the whole mass of the human race.

But now there is a danger looming before us, and it is right that I should direct your attention to it. You must see that in these days there is a very great stir, a very great movement proceeding, I doubt not from the best of motives, but guided not always by the wisest discretion and the fullest experience, but there is a very great movement towards a system of compulsory education. Now you must watch this with much care and jealousy; for recollect this, my dear friends, that if the State is to impose a compulsory system of education, it must impose also a *secular* system of education. No State in the present day can impose any practical system that shall involve the teaching of dogmatic truth in every school, and the school must be left entirely to the teaching of those things that concern man's lower life. But now observe how that will act upon you. If a compulsory system be instituted it will involve a secular system, and if a secular system be imposed, where is the place of the Ragged School teacher—where is the place of the "Ragged School Union"—where is the place of all you who are assembled here to-night, but to declare that it is your duty, as it is your pleasure, to promote amongst the poorest of mankind a knowledge of the Gospel of Christ? And then mark this, if the State once undertakes a system of education, although it be a secular system, from that time the sources of private benevolence and private charity will be dried up. I do not believe that with all the zeal that you could command on this or any future occasion you would be able to raise from the public

those funds that shall enable you to cope with a system which you will view with abhorrence, but which you will uselessly and unavailingly resist. Now therefore, that is the reason why I urge upon you to make if possible still greater efforts than you are making at the present time. I want every effort that can possibly be made to be made, to show that our system has reclaimed thousands upon tens of thousands of the most destitute of the population; that it is in fact the only system whereby you can work upon this miserable and vagrant class, that it is the only system whereby in our present state of society you can hope to give even the very outlines of religion to a very large proportion of the population. I want you to show by additional efforts, I want you to show by a Report next year ten times more vigorous and more full than the one you have heard to-night, that you are positively an institution in these realms, that you cannot be put down, that you cannot be abridged in any one particular without causing positive and infinite mischief. That is why I call upon you now to make greater and still greater efforts, it is a matter of existence, it is a matter of life; I say life and existence because I hope and believe that your very souls are bound up in the welfare both temporal and eternal of the thousands and tens of thousands God has committed to your charge.

This calls to my mind the old story—the deficiency of voluntary teachers. But it is not enough that a certain number of teachers have come forward who were in the classes, and who have risen from the class to the chair, and are ten thousand times better than nine-tenths of the so-called "professors." And I tell you what it is, I would rather have a Ragged School girl, who had learnt the Gospel of Christ, to instruct me and my children, than I would the Bishop of this, or the Bishop of that, or any of those theologians with big names and big titles, who profess to know theology, but who know nothing whatever of the spirit of theology.

It fills me with astonishment and with awe that in these days in which we live, that the wealth of this country, increasing as it is, increasing to the most alarming proportions—alarming, I say, because it seems to me that the more wealth increases, the greater the extent to which people love it—that in these days of alarm, these days of foreboding, that wealth is checked by avarice and economy and thrift, and that we cannot bring the people to see that it is their interest, that it is their safety to bestow of their abundance for the purpose of aiding such agencies as yours, and reclaiming these miserable, wretched, and forgotten children, who are still roaming about the metropolis. For if we have 30,000 in the Ragged School, there are at the very least thirty or forty thousand out of it, and it is these thirty or forty thousand outside that bring discredit upon the Ragged School system. We are told by some that the Ragged School has produced no good effect, and these people look at the thousands who have never come within our reach, and pay no attention, for a variety of reasons, to those thousands within our pale. And then when we find these miserable parochial authorities, these Justice Shallows, when you find them coming down and imposing heavy taxes and rates upon these Ragged Schools, and trying to draw from that which is the very life blood of London some few drops to swell their coffers and reduce their own rates, why let me ask them this: they think to get from these Ragged Schools some paltry two or three hundred pounds, but supposing we, to prove the efficacy of our system, and the injustice of their demand by a sudden decree, broke up all our Schools, turned the 30,000 children in them upon the streets, and then said to the parish, "Now look to the rates, now look to these children that we have turned loose, now look to the condition of the country," and I will undertake to say that they, by their silly and contemptible saving of a small portion of the rates, would find they had brought upon them-

selves a hundredfold, ay, two hundredfold the amount of expense and trouble that we are now sparing them by the efforts we are making. (Applause.)

My dear friends, I hope sincerely that we shall still hold fast to the great principle upon which the Ragged School system is founded; it is founded upon the pure simple principle of the Gospel, upon the great saving doctrine of the Gospel administered from the heart with love and kindness. This is your glory, this is your strength, it is *my* glory and honour, ay! that it is, that I have been so long the chairman and president of this Union, and all that I can say is that if by the new system of compulsory education, to be adopted under the new parliament, all benevolence is to be put an end to, and the Ragged School Union is to be numbered with the dead, I will also annex to my name conjointly with that which my friend Lord Palmerston was pleased to annex to my name (K.G.), I will also annex to my name "Ex-President of the Ragged School Union."

Now the Report contains two matters which I think are of very great importance. The Report makes mention of the flower show and the plants exhibited by the children of our Schools. Now this is a very simple matter, but because it is a very simple matter it is also very true and valuable. I believe there is nothing among the secondary means of instruction, anything so useful in improving the children and in humanizing them. I do not believe there is any one thing to surpass window gardening and flower culture. I have been struck with the manner in which it has called out all their various qualities of attention and care. I have been struck, too, by the manner in which it has improved their knowledge of sacred and holy things. They have seen in the first place in the plant the necessity for care, the necessity for cleanliness, the necessity for frequent waterings, and from that frequent watering they have come at last to the conclusion that in their own case there is also the necessity for frequent washing. And then in the delicate and wonderful growing of the plants they have seen the hand of a superintending Providence, and have applied that to their own case. Therefore, I say this window gardening has been the means of improving them both physically and morally.

The Report also speaks of a new proposition, a new society and a most remarkable one: one that will be of vital importance as this generation goes on. It is a society amongst the juvenile portion of the poorest class of London for the maintenance of the sanctity of God's Holy Day. Now that appears to me to be a discovery of modern times. If you can only enlist the young in work so good and holy as this, you may have hopes of the next generation. If you have no hope of the next generation you can have no hope of the empire of Great Britain. But everything must be done now or never. Depend upon it the time is coming on when we shall be exposed to such storms and difficulties, perhaps menaces on the one side, and timidity on the other, that he will be more than man who shall be able to govern this great empire. But if you can impart to the people, particularly now that a large proportion of them are admitted to the suffrage, I say if you can impart to them the principles of Divine truth, and with them the power of internal self-control, you will then constitute a nation of real citizens to whom liberty and all the blessings of freedom may be safely confided. But happen what may, I say, let us stand firm to the principles that we have wherever we find ourselves. Let every one of us, collectively, if we can, meet together, or individually if we are separated, whether we continue in the great bond of union, or whether we be broken up into our original units, let us stand faithfully to the propagation of the great Truth and the diffusion of the name of Christ among the great masses of the people. If we be destroyed we shall die like martyrs, but if we survive, we shall survive with the motto of the great and good man Joshua, "Choose you this day

whom ye will serve; as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Rev. GORDON CALTHROP.—Though the growth which has been spoken of, as our noble chairman pointed out, has been gradual, I am not sure that we ought to be dissatisfied on that account, for gradual growths are more lasting than quick ones; the gourd which springs up in a night perishes in as short a period, but the oak which is slow in its growth stands and endures for centuries. Another feature that struck me, though the report was put briefly by your good secretary, was that thankfulness for your past successes was not any reason for sitting still and being content with the progress made. But it is looked upon as an earnest of future prosperity, it is looked upon as a reason why greater effort should be made, more exertion put forth by those teachers who are gathered together here to hear the speeches which should lead them to go with firm resolution to the great work which God has put into their hands to accomplish. I think perhaps it will be best for me to occupy the few minutes which I shall spend here by addressing myself to those already engaged in this cause. There is one thing on the first page of this Report struck me as having expressed clearly and distinctly the views of every one of the teachers here present. You will notice—you must have heard it—that it was stated here that the hopes of the institution are not founded upon any attempt to disseminate any secular instruction apart from the Word of God. You lay the Bible as the foundation, not at all despising secular instruction; such things as our noble chairman has spoken of—flower gardens, and the introduction of better social habits among the people. You know that as your starting point you lay the Bible as the foundation, and the great object of your work is to bring the souls of those children to the Lord Jesus Christ. You aim at no lower end than that. Now I trust you will never depart from it for the nation's sake. It is a most important work that you are engaged in, and as we are told that times of great trouble and searching of heart are coming upon us, let me remind you that you must do what in you lies to bring those matters intrusted to your care to a satisfactory conclusion, that you must endeavour to lead those committed to your charge to a knowledge of the Gospel of the grace of God. Not many days ago I was told that a clergyman was travelling through a very beautiful part of the country on the top of a coach, and the coachman seemed a very gruff sort of man, scarcely ever speaking. The clergyman, who was an inquisitive man, wished to learn something of the characteristics of the country through which they were passing, and applied to the coachman for information, but could get none. "Whose park is that?" enquired thec lergyman. "Don't know," said the coachman. They went on a little farther and came to a river. "What river is that?" asked the clergyman. "Dont know," was the reply. At last the clergyman tired of receiving the same answer, turned to the coachman and said, "Pray, what is there you *do* know?" "Well, sir," said he, "I know how to drive my horses, and a precious good thing it is for you that I know how to do that." And so say I with regard to you Ragged School teachers, it will be a good thing for the whole nation and a good thing for the Church of Christ if you know how to drive your horses. Make it your first object to bring those children to a knowledge of Jesus, effect if you can the amelioration of their social condition, the improving of their tastes, the cultivation of decent habits, give them a knowledge such as you can of secular instruction; but for their sakes, for the sake of the Church of Christ, for the sake of your own native land, bring them to Jesus. Another thing struck you I am sure, and that is that not only do you hold that the Bible must be the foundation of your teaching, and the great end and object of your work must be to bring the souls of those children to Jesus, but you hold, and I hope you will ever continue to hold, that none but spiritual agents

can be expected to do spiritual work. If you were just to look abroad upon the societies which are accomplishing the greatest amount of work, I believe you will find that of those societies and those institutions those alone are successful which recognise this as their fundamental principle. As a man sows so shall he reap: if you make organisation your object you shall have organisation; if you make forms and ceremonies your aim you shall have forms and ceremonies; for as a man sows so shall he reap: but if it be the object of an institution like this to promote the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ you must have those who know the value of Jesus Christ for themselves. You must not send men and women with a Bible in their hands which they have not found precious to themselves, who know nothing experimentally of the saving grace of the Gospel, to teach others, for as we all very well know, children will very soon find them out. They soon know whether a man or woman feels what they teach, they have very sharp eyes and quickly examine us. After all it is the repetition of the old story of the two farmers. One man was an exceedingly successful farmer, and the other did not manage to succeed at all, with him everything went to rack and ruin; and at last the man who was so unsuccessful came to the other and said, "How in the world is it that I who am quite as able a man as you in my farming cannot succeed at all, whilst you seem to be so successful?" "Well," said the man, "I'll tell you where the difference lies; the difference lies just in this, you say *go*, and I say *come*, that is just the difference—you tell your labourers to go and do the work, whereas I get up early in the morning and am ready to start with them and ready to see the work carried out—the whole difference lies in these two little words go and come." So is it with the teacher in his Sunday School class, so is it with the preacher in the pulpit, so is it with anyone that tries to do work for the Lord Jesus Christ. The difference between one man's success and another's is this, one says "Go alone," whilst the other says "Come with me." At the same time let me offer one word of caution, that I may not be the means of discouraging one of those whom God would not have made sad. I believe that if you want to manufacture a "Revival" it is a perfectly possible thing to do. If you wish to produce the appearance of spiritual life you can do it, but if you are going to do God's work in God's way you must be content like the husbandman to wait the proper time for the harvest. You must be willing to see many of your thoughts and efforts frustrated and destroyed, and many works lie by without any apparent fruit, and whilst you have sown the seed, you must be content perhaps, like your Divine Master, to see others come forward and gather in the fruit and reap the harvest. He laid the foundation and left his apostles and successors to carry on and complete the edifice. But lest I might say something to dishearten those who are perhaps almost ready now to despair and despond, who feel comparatively useless, according to their own estimation—why, my dear friends, let me remind you that the work of the ministry, for it is truly a work of the ministry in which you are engaged, that of winning souls to Christ, is a work in which you must not expect immediate results; but you must be content to toil on, and work upon the unmanageable material which has been subjected to your influence. And then remember, in one case the material may be more manageable, and in another less so. I was very much struck the other day with the difference between the progress on two sides of the tunnel they are making on the railway between Savoy and France, which, I believe, is to be about thirteen miles long, and which goes under the mountains. I was very much struck with finding that, although on both sides of the tunnel—the French side and the Italian side—the machinery is precisely similar, there is the same skill, the engineers are as able, the progress which they make on the Savoy side is far more rapid than on the Italia

side. But though they have the same machinery, and there is the same skill and ability in their engineers, they have a harder material to work upon on the one side than on the other side, and hence the difference in the progress. And it may be that some men and women who cannot progress in the Ragged School work have their lot cast in a specially difficult place, the material is harder and more unmanageable, and I say, let them not be discouraged on this account, let them go on, and above all let them remember that the Spirit of God, to whom we look for success—we do not look to our own efforts—the sovereign Spirit of God is able to carry us through it all, and by the labours of his people to bring about that time when the Church of Christ shall be gathered in, that Church which is to be without spot and without blemish. One word more, dear friends, before I close. You are reminded in this Report on the first page of the absolute necessity for prayer. You may say you do not require reminding, probably not and yet at the same time it is a thing that we sometimes neglect, and we need to stir up each other's minds by way of remembrance with regard to the duty of prayer. There is an old story about a clergyman who happened to be passing along the road and passed one of his parishioners, who was breaking stones—he was a poor man, but one who took a strong interest in the spiritual work of the parish, and his clergyman stopped to speak to him, and in conversation lamented the slow progress of spiritual work in his parish. "Ah!" said he, "I only wish I could break the hearts of my people with the same ease with which you seem able to break those stones." "It may be, sir," said the old man, looking up from his work—you know how they manage it; they have a little piece of carpet, upon which they kneel before a heap of stones,—"it may be," said the old man, looking up at him with a meaning glance, "you do not work as I do—upon your knees," and I have thought, dear friends, that might be the reason why we are not altogether so successful as, perhaps, our predecessors were. We sometimes talk of the shallowness and superficiality of the present age, and the gloomy prospect in the future, though I am disposed to take the cheerful side of things. We hear of men who were giants, some fifty or sixty years ago. "There were giants in those days," men who achieved great and marked successes. It may be that we, their successors, are a nation of dwarfs. I don't know, but if so, if there be any difference between us and them, it does not arise from the fact that we preach a different gospel, that we have less powers bestowed upon us, less appliances for carrying on the work. It may be that the difference consists in the fact suggested by the simple words of the Stone-breaker, that we do not work upon our knees so much as our predecessors did. Before I sit down I should like to remind you, dear fellow-labourers in this great metropolis, let me remind you of the reward which is in store for all the faithful and persevering workers. I have often thought with much thankfulness of that expression in one of the parables of our Lord, in which He says that those whom we have benefited in our past life, in our career through life, shall receive us into everlasting habitations; and I like to picture to myself the earnest worker for the cause of Christ, such as a Ragged School teacher, coming to the end of his career, passing out into the unseen world received by angels, and then as he comes into those mysterious regions, we see many who stretch forth hands of invitation, and who receive him into the city with congratulation, and the thought arises in our minds, Who are these? and a voice answers, "These are they whom he taught when they were his Ragged School class"; these are the poor whom he succoured; these are the degraded, forsaken men and children to whom he carried the Gospel of the grace of God—he has forgotten them; but the record is on high, as we have been reminded, and they crowd to receive him; they stretch out hands of loving welcome to him, and

receive him into those glorious realms; but the dearest welcome of all is the welcome falling from that voice which he has heard sustaining him throughout his whole career, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Rev. R. D. WILSON said:—The Report itself is a very wonderful document, yet it is but a plain and unvarnished statement of facts setting forth a record of a more than ordinary amount of Christian activity. Now, there are two things which struck me when this Report was read—first of all, the wisdom, the judgment, and the industry displayed in the variety of works which is here set before us. Then another thing struck me was the *thoroughness* of the work which this Association is doing. There is no shallow Imperialism here, no pretentious scientific, experimentalizing, seeing what may be done, trying to arrive at a conclusion as to which is best. No—there is nothing of this from beginning to end of the Report—they seem to know their work most thoroughly; they drive at the very root of the evil against which they are called to contend; they look along every line of the evil which they wish to cure, and then they set to work with a will and accomplish the task they have to do. They endeavour by God's blessing to get rid of ignorance by enlightenment, of indolence by industry, of light-fingered theft by honesty and toil, they endeavour to get rid of card-sharping by honest and wholesome reading, and they try to cure the moral and social degradation which everywhere they see by quickening them through the agency of the Holy Spirit, inducing a feeling of womanly modesty, and of manly, self-respect amongst their scholars. And they not only *try* to do all these things, but they do them right heartily and robustly. They do not assert, however, that even in these things are accomplished the high ends at which they aim; on the contrary, they do feel and assert that to change the character and destiny of one human soul lies not within the compass of human possibilities or human agencies; and humbly and trustingly they look up to that God and Father who loves the sinner with a deep and quenchless compassion, to that Saviour who died for his salvation, to that Holy Spirit who alone can quicken the dead and regenerate the degraded; and then from those toiling and true-hearted thousands there goes up earnest prayer, to that blessed Spirit who first of all gazed over the formless void, and by his unassisted might evoked a world into order and beauty, and they ask Him to descend upon these poor children who are born to the terrible heritage of want and ignorance and crime that He may help them to make them the sons and daughters of the Lord God. Such prayers, we know, are never offered in vain—when we work for God we are never engaged in hopeless toil—when we are advancing along His path we feel that we never walk with aimless feet, we are always found doing the work which is nearest and dearest to His own heart—we are advancing along the line upon which He accumulates all the influences and agencies that are necessary to extend His great and glorious purposes, and He has said, "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts," &c. So that we feel assured that success must attend the efforts of our brethren and sisters in connection with this Association. Success has attended their efforts already, but larger success we verily and hopefully believe will still crown their faithful and self-denying efforts. It may be that we have reason to look with something like gloom into the future, but for my own part I look with hopefulness into the future which is dawning upon us. I believe, that bright as the past may have been, hopeful as the present is, yet they will have no glory by reason of the great glory which shall excel them in the future. I do in my inmost heart believe that whatever storms may come, God will never

depart from the helm of that ark which He is steering, but will still steer it on through storm and tempest in safety, with its precious redeemed freight, to the haven where they all wish to be, that He will keep them, and guide them, and strengthen them, and multiply until their work on earth is accomplished, and then He will receive them to the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Now it is well that this Report sets before us very distinctly the idea that, many as are its secular agencies, it does not for one moment believe that these can accomplish, even used most wisely and determinedly, the work at which they aim. They seek to inbreed the Spirit and truth of God into the young hearts that come under their training and where everything else has failed that has always succeeded. Now it is very well for us to look, for instance, upon the policeman as a preserver of the peace, but he is not a very likely man to produce a moral reformation anywhere; and the young thieves in the back slums of London never look upon "Bobby" as anything very likely to draw them to a better life, or win them to the higher platforms of existence. And again I think the multiplication of prisons a terrible blot on our 19th century civilization, but nevertheless it is a necessity—but these are not likely to prove a school of virtue to the poor hundreds and thousands of vicious children within their walls; and I hold, that it is of all things the most terrible to make a poor child, who in his ignorance has done wrong, familiar with the inside of a prison, where he mixes up with all that is debasing and demoralizing. Well, where these things have failed, then the Ragged School Teachers come, they set to work in the very same locality, they operate upon the very same material, they do not fail—God endorses their work and makes them instruments of temporal and eternal good to those who seem to prove utterly hopeless under all other kinds of human agency. My dear friends, you may often think as you go to your Schools and Classes Sunday after Sunday that you have no success, but we are very poor judges of what constitutes success so far as human nature is concerned. I remember one time in my life lying upon the banks of a beautiful river and gazing upon a scene as fair as human eyes could behold, and by my side was a fellow student who was full of antique lore, and could tell you the history of every family in the county in which we had our home, and as we gazed upon the battlements of a fine old castle, he told me the following particulars. It is said that this is how that noble family came into possession of this great estate. One of their ancestors had been in France nobly fighting the battles of England there, and when the war was over and he came home, he was received wheresoever he went with great acclamations and enthusiasm, and so deeply did the king feel his indebtedness to him that he even got up a banquet to do him honour. In the heat and excitement of the feast the king said, "Ask what you will and it shall be granted, for you have laid myself and my kingdom under deep and lasting obligations to you." And he said, "Grant me those 4,000 acres of land." The company stood aghast, and said to one another, "What a fool he was to ask for 4,000 acres of unreclaimed moor land that will never be any good to him. Why, he might, by a word, have made himself the first man in the empire," and yet that is the boon he asked. But he was not only a hero, but he was a man of great skill and enterprise, and by-and-by, in that northern district, the sound of the axe was heard in those primeval forests, clearing a roadway through those tangled woods. Again, they saw the labouring oxen drawing the long straight furrow—and so it went on through all his life. Others succeeded him, and it went on still improving, and when I gazed upon the scene there was that old castle standing, surrounded by its wide-spreading parks, there was the white waving harvest, there were small English homesteads, with the blue smoke curling into wreaths, there was the pretty chapel and

the school, altogether it was a scene that did one's eyes good to look upon, and I could not but think, this is a reward fit for a hero to receive and a king to bestow. And there comes another murmur from the far distant ages, "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." "Strange inheritance," you say, imbruted humanity drugged to death by its manifold sins, after a gloomy life —a strange reward for the humiliation of a life that had wrung from its inmost soul the bitter cry, "The birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." But yet I say, those twelve men who had drunk of their inspiration from His own blessed lips, go east and west, north and south, they proclaim the unsearchable riches of the Gospel, humanity rises into new beauty clothed with a new power, others succeed them, and that work is to go on and on, until after the millennial glory of a redeemed world, a number that no man can number are to stand before the throne of God, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Then all shall see that even that was worthy of the agony that Christ endured in this world of ours to redeem immortal men from the death which they had brought upon themselves. Yes, beloved friends, and more and greater than that, the heart of infinite pity shall then be satisfied, for he shall see of the travail of his soul, and be abundantly satisfied. Now these very sections of humanity, amongst which you are labouring, so apparently hopelessly, constitute part and parcel of that inheritance which the Father had promised to give to the Son; and he says to each of you, "Go there and labour for Me: hew away through those dark regions, and light them up with the splendours of eternal truth; I will take care that you shall not labour in vain;" and the day will come when myriads of these poor outcasts of our great London will stand beneath the deep-piercing eye of infinite purity, and as God looks them through and through, He will declare that "there is neither spot nor blemish," &c.]

The Bishop of CORK said—We have some Ragged Schools in Ireland, and indeed I have been at some of their meetings. Of course, like all Ragged Schools, they have taken their start from the Ragged Schools that have commenced in England, so that, you see, when we commence a thing we never know where it will end. Now they go through our Ragged Schools and examine the children, and ask them questions. At one Ragged School the question was, "What is an unclean spirit?" A lot of hands were put up—one said one thing, and another said another; at last a dirty, unwashed little chap said, "I know what it is—a dirty divil." Now, there is a great deal of mind, there is a great deal of intellect, there is a great deal of spirit, lying imbedded in the hundreds and thousands who live in the garrets, and the lanes, and the alleys of this great and enormous and unparalleled city, and it is the Ragged School which brings it out. But now in another school in Ireland the question was about Abraham and Sarah, and the examiner asked, "Why was Hagar turned away?" One said one thing and another said another; at last "I have it," said a little girl; "for giving impudence to her mistress." In another school, where there were a number of old Irishmen, there was a man reading to them, and they were all listening, with their mouths open, and swallowing it. He was reading about the Good Samaritan: "A certain man went down to Jerusalem," and so forth, "and by chance" (there was an old man up in the corner with his mouth open), "and by chance there passed by a certain priest that way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side." This old chap jumps up with a knowing look. "I wouldn't doubt him," says he. But are these English people in this audience? Why, I was told "the English people are so very grave, so very staid, so very sober, you must not for the world say anything to tickle their fancy." Now I don't think

it is any part of Christianity to be moody and morose, and gloomy. No, we are to be cheerful and rejoice. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice ye righteous." Now, my lord, I regard these Ragged Schools with very peculiar interest. I suppose, notwithstanding the noble character of our Chairman in every respect, he will, without any derogation of his nobility—which he adorns—he will allow that there may be real nobility in lowly life. What constitutes nobility? Why noble natures and noble training. We find, on reading the history of humanity, that God has been graciously pleased to select some of the noblest specimens of human nature from among lowly life. Now, I say myself, after an experience of nearly fifty years in the Christian ministry, that some of the finest specimens of human nature that it has been my lot to come in contact with, some of the brightest examples of sterling principle, sterling piety, and exemplary bearing, I came in contact with in the lowly regions of humanity. I say, then, we have very little idea, perhaps, of the amount of mind contained in this city, with its teeming multitudes, unparalleled as it is in the history of the world. If we only had a conception of the amount of mind, affection, and candour and integrity is imbedded in the spirit, even the spirit of those who are "dead in trespasses and sins" within that great circle that encloses the population of London! What is intellect unless it be acted upon? it remains dormant. What is spiritual power unless it be acted upon? it is lifeless. Many things help to bring out intellect. Family arrangements, social arrangements, school arrangements, college arrangements, bring out intellect, and it takes a commanding position in the earth, to make itself felt in every portion of the world. Domestic arrangements and social arrangements bring out the moral power that is in the heart of man. Family affection and social affection, friendship, and candour introduce much that is beneficial to humanity. But there is something still higher, which does not belong merely to the intellect and morals. It is known that there is the same capability in them of being enlightened in their hearts and souls by the Spirit of God. Their hearts are capable of being enlarged and gladdened by religion, and thus they will be prepared for that blessed home where they will be clothed in immortal righteousness, and be made higher; aye, higher than philosophers, higher than orators, higher than statesmen, higher than peers, higher than princes, higher than Sovereigns, higher than Emperors. My dear Christian brethren, the poorest peasant, the humblest tenant and inhabitant of the poorest body within the precincts of this mighty circle, if he or she comes by a living faith to Jesus, and trusts in him for pardon and for forgiveness; if that person does really hope for life and immortality through that Jesus, he shall stand at the everlasting mountains. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion," &c. And if every orb of yonder universe spouted cataracts of fire, one single spark could not light upon his head, for God protects his children, and "they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing"; and that poor peasant or that poor inhabitant of the garret can look above, and with erected eyes can say, "God is my father, heaven is my home, and eternity will be my lifetime." He can say, "I am going to mingle amongst the excellent of the earth; I am going to be the companion of patriarchs, of prophets, of apostles, of martyrs, of angels and archangels, of the company of heaven and principalities and powers, and though a child of suffering here, of sorrow here, of sin here on earth, yet through Jesus, who loved me and gave himself for me, who was delivered for my sins, and raised again for my justification; through him, little as I am, insignificant as I am, unknown as I am, unvalued as I am, yet through that Jesus, I, even I, can dwell and shall dwell in the fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore." There was once a little boy in Ireland

playing marbles and joking very much, and a clergyman who was passing by heard his jokes and took a fancy to him. He sent him to Trinity College, Dublin, where he distinguished himself, and at last was called to the Bar. At the Bar he also distinguished himself, and so he went on and at last took a house and furnished it with all the accompaniments of respectability. Now in those days a journey from Cork to Dublin took a very long time, and this old clergyman, who had not for many years been able to see anything of the lad he brought up, was very anxious to go and see him. He had heard of his progress, and intended many times to take the journey. At last he made up his mind and set off, and after some time he reached Dublin, found his way to the square where this boy lived, and found the house. Now he was a plain country clergyman, and didn't look very grand; and when the door was opened by a powdered servant, his questions were answered very haughtily. The clergyman asked, "Is your master at home; I want to see him." "He can't be seen," said the servant. "But I must see him," said the old gentleman. "You *can't* see him, then," said the servant. "Show me up to the drawing-room," said the clergyman; "your master will see me." There was something in his manner, something in his voice, that startled the the servant, and so, after "humming and hawing," he showed him upstairs into a very nicely furnished room. The old gentleman walked in, took a chair, sat opposite the fire, and put his feet on the fender. Presently the door opened, and in walked a fine-looking gentleman, and seeing a stranger with his feet on the fender, he said, "What do you want, sir?" The old clergyman looked round, and immediately their eyes met; the gentleman rushed forward, threw his arms round his neck, and exclaimed, "My dear old friend, you are welcome; the fender is yours, the furniture is yours, the house is yours, all that I have is yours, my more than father." And who is this I am speaking of? why, the first lawyer of his time, John Philpot Curran, Master of the Rolls. Yes, the little boy playing at marbles was little Jack Curran. Yet what a mine of intellect was in that boy. When I was in Ireland many years ago I was once walking a distance of ten miles to the city, and in the course of my walk I came to a gate. I got on the gate, and inside was a very green field—Ireland generally is green; but this field was particularly so. There were three or four milch cows grazing in the field, and at one corner stood a pretty little cottage, with roses growing all over the front of it, and in full blow. As I was gazing upon it all, and thinking how fine the cows look, how pretty the cottage is, how beautiful the roses seem, an old man came out of the cottage in a short coat with large pockets, and walked about as though he felt quite at home. Thinks I to myself, I suppose this is the steward. So I said, "My man, whose field is this?" "It's my field," says he. "Oh," says I; and I thought, "Perhaps, he's let it to some man to feed his cows in;" so I said, "Whose cows are these?" "They're *my* cows," says he. "Oh," I thought, "he's come out, then, to mind the cows." "Whose cottage is that?" says I. "That's *my* cottage," says he. "Oh!" thinks I. This altered my tune, so I said to him, "My friend, you have a very nice house and very good cattle, and you seem altogether to be very pleasant and comfortable." "Yes, I am," says he. "However have you managed it in these hard times?" said I. "Well," says he, "I will tell you. Many years ago I lived down very far in the south of Ireland, and I had a little boy, and I thought it would be a very good thing for me to send this little boy to school; so I sent him to the parish school. He had not been there very long before the schoolmaster called on me and said, 'I'd be very much obliged if you would take your son away from my school.' 'Oh,' says I, 'what's the matter, what's he been doing?' 'He is not a bad boy,' said he, 'but the fact is, he puts such bothering questions to me that I cannot answer

them, and I'd be much obliged if you would take him away.'" However, after that statement the father felt very glad about his little boy, so he took him away and sent him to a better school, and paid a great sum—at least it would not be thought much now, but in those days it was considered a great deal—he paid ten shillings a quarter for him; but he had not been there very long before he had the very same request, for he used to bother them there also; and so he went on from school to school until at last he worked his way to Trinity College, where he got his degree, and was sent to the Bar, and he got on so well at the Bar, that he soon got into full business, and the very first fruits of that little boy,s earnings were applied in the purchase of this little field and the cottage and the cows, and here was his father going about with his hands in his pockets, whistling a tune, and as happy as he possibly could be. "Oh," said he, "if you were only to see my son, his shoulders are so broad, and he has *such* calves to his legs!" and so he went on; it would do your heart good to hear him dilate upon his son, his stature, and the proportions of his form, and the colour of his eyes, and the ring of his voice; it would do your heart good if you were to see that old man going about his little farm, sunning himself there in his old age—enjoying himself in his old age. God b'essed him because he took care of his son; and God has put you in the place of fathers and mothers, and God will bless you a thousandfold. You know very well at that time how God went in amongst the common farmers, and selected a man who was shearing sheep, of Herculean strength, to do his work. That man he enlightened—his heart he touched; and you had in that man that valuable, industrious, and laborious commentator, Thomas Scott. And when God again showed that he is no respecter of persons, he goes down to the humblest and meanest trade, and one that you are apt to laugh at, and he selects a man, and you remember the text that arrested him—"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." He was aroused by that text, "and," says he, "the devil seized it and pulled one way, and I pulled the other, and I pulled stronger, and he pulled stronger, but by the grace of God I pulled it from him, and have kept it from that day to this." This man, for preaching the gospel, was thrown into prison, and in that prison he found the "Book of Martyrs"; but though his body was confined, his spirit was free, and he dived and dug into the Bible. And out of this imprisonment—this long imprisonment, with its darkness and dreariness, what comes forth? A book that ranks with "Paradise Lost"—a book that ranks with "Homer." What is it? "The Pilgrim's Progress"; and the author was the tinker, John Bunyan. Oh, my Christian brethren, let us see what a multitude of minds there are committed to our trust in these times, and let us not be disheartened; the God of truth has his eyes upon the truth, and nothing can put it down. Truth is God's own chosen agent: it is the instrument of light: it is the instrument of life: it is the instrument of faith: faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Let us not, my friends, be disheartened; but I would say to you, my Christian brethren, it gives me unqualified pleasure as a Christian minister, sitting upon the Irish bench; and few clergymen amongst the sixteen thousand you have altogether; and the two thousand in this metropolis can sympathise so cordially with you, as can the individual who is now addressing you. Born in the remotest and most backward of all the counties of Ireland, the youngest child of the only Protestant family that was in that parish, by God's good providence brought to know and to get some little inkling of the truth, working his way through difficulties of many kinds—for he lost his father in early childhood—he worked his way to Trinity College—he entered there without being master of a single shilling,

and from that day he has not known the want of five, ten, twenty, or fifty pounds. God was with me, the truth was his instrument, and here I am.

Rev. WILLIAM EMERY said: Some of my most pleasant reminiscences are those connected with the days in which I was engaged as a Ragged School Teacher in this metropolis, and though some years have passed since then, I have not forgotten the memory of those days, but recollect how God blessed the work in which we were then engaged. But having had some experience in Ragged School work, it may qualify me to say a word or two to cheer those who are still engaged in this noble work. We are apt to boast of our civilisation, and that we are known throughout the world as a people of large-hearted sympathies, who have exerted ourselves to make known the gospel to others, after we have realised its great work ourselves; but there is something humiliating in the fact, that notwithstanding our advance and progress, we are here to-night reminded that in London there still exist certain things that can only be described as moral wastes. We have advanced in all kinds of knowledge, art, and science, yet it seems a sad fact that in close proximity to some of our most thriving districts and commercial thoroughfares, there are spots where many would be afraid to enter, hotbeds of vice and crime, and which must prove injurious, not only to the immediate dwellers in those spots, but also to the neighbourhood. But it is also a blessed fact that we have come to realise this state of things, and are now putting forth every effort to raise those degraded people to the higher platform of knowledge. My resolution recognises the work of Ragged Schools. Are there any in this country who could fail to recognise this work, or who could by any possibility ignore its existence? I do feel that if the time should ever come when those results which have been referred to to-night should take place—though I confess I have no fear our country would perform any act like the breaking up of a Union like this—it could only be the presage of its decline and fall; and if it could come, I should feel that the sun of England would go down in darkness. We have been reminded this evening, of boys and girls, men and women, lifted up from degradation, folly and crime, to lives of purity and devotion, to lives of true and earnest Christianity. We have been able to rejoice in the multiplied results of that truth, and we have seen that among all classes in all ranks, down among the lowest as well as up among the highest, that all men are possible heroes. We have seen developed in the case of many persons, a mine of moral power, of pure affection, of spiritual life and energy, which should impel us to renewed exertions. I recollect once seeing in a shop-window a pair of pictures, and they struck me very much. One was a picture of a poor miserable man with matted hair, tattered garments, and shoeless feet, with all he had in a little bundle under his arm, making application at the Emigration Office for a passage abroad; the other was that of a good-tempered man respectably dressed, beside him a cheerful wife, and in his arms a laughing babe. I looked on this picture and on that. I rejoiced to feel that it was a true representation of what many of my countrymen oppressed with poverty here, ground under hard toil here, had been privileged to realise in those comparatively new influences, as I may call them, which are far over the sea; but while my heart was glad for such results as these, I, as a Christian man, rejoiced to believe and know that there were more blessed and higher results than these, and that numbers of such had been brought to understand the great love of God, and rejoice in that mercy which is in Christ Jesus, our divine Lord and Master. These are the things which have been seen; and so it has come to pass that piety has grown in all its beauty, where profligacy and sin before were rampant, and that where there was idleness there is honest industry, and where there was ignorance there is bright intelligence; and those lifted out

of the gutter and the mire have contributed to the wealth, stability, and progress of the country which has given them birth, and honoured it by their love and devotion. We speak of moral wastes. Now we must treat these, it seems to me, something after the fashion in which we treat the waste tracts of country with which we have to do. Before the desert can become a fruitful field there must be streams in the desert, and hence it is that those who are interested in the cultivation of large districts, which have not before been cultivated, in these and other lands, tell us that the great want in these sterile parts is irrigation; and so they first endeavour to turn the clear and limpid stream; they devote their efforts to cut channels for the water to run over these sterile parts, that by-and-by they may blossom and spring into beauty, and produce fruits that will sustain the life of man. That is what we are doing in connection with our moral waste. Every Ragged School, we believe and hope, is a reservoir of holy influences, and from out of it, however humble the building may be, however secluded its situation, there flows forth into the surrounding districts, into every court and alley, by the bedside of the sick and dying, and to those who are forgetful of their duty alike to God and man, there flows forth from these Ragged Schools, these reservoirs of holy truth and feeling, a stream of pure and earnest Christian warmth and love; and as these streams flow wider and wider, overleaping all the boundaries within which man would sometimes seek to confine them, and the wider they are spread, we see as the result of it a wonderful moral transformation, for which our hearts are praying and our hands are labouring. As we trace the results in the upgrowth and elevation of those who were down-trodden and sinful, we exclaim with thankfulness, with the prophet of old, "The wilderness and the solitary place," &c. And what are these great results? They are not, let it be said, merely an improvement in their material circumstances and position. I hold it to be a grand thing when a man's home is made worthy of the name; and the most attractive of all places under heaven, I rejoice to know that that has been done, and that homes which were once scenes of strife and misery, squalid poverty and wretched ignorance, have now become lit up with all the light of Christian hope and domestic virtue; and fathers and mothers, realising the sacredness of the bond which binds them to one another, seek to train up their children in virtue and religion, and make them meet for the great home-gathering before the Father in the eternal world. I hold *that* to be a grand result; and I know, too, that there are hearts which have been blessed by this benevolent effort, hearts in which there was no pure thought, no holy desire, no righteous purpose. These hearts, many of them, are now all a-glow with Christian love; lit up by glorious Christian hope; and before the eyes of these emancipated little ones, there is opening a prospect so magnificent that all the efforts of mind and body are being put forth in the hope to rise higher than their fathers were, and to do like him of whom we have just heard—be the means of blessing the old age of those who, perhaps, may not have blessed them so well in their infancy and their childhood. We know, too, that there are some in our distant colonies who are doing right good service to the State, as the result of that education they have received in these schools. I hold it to be a glorious fact that there comes the letter of remembrance from those who once sat upon Ragged School forms in London, and not only a letter, as I am told, but the substantial gift to help forward the work that has been so rich in blessing others. There are others, as we have heard to-night, who actually sit in the chair in our Ragged Schools now, and are teaching that same blessed truth which has been the means of their reclamation and elevation, and there are numbers more to whom our noble Chairman referred to-night, who year after year come into this hall, and claim the honourable distinction so wisely given by this Union

to those who have shown fidelity in domestic and other service. We are called upon by this resolution to thank God for the great results. But while we give utterance to these thanks, let us not forget that there remaineth very much land yet to be possessed. Notwithstanding all that has been done, there are many human hearts that need to realise your sympathy; and the only sad thing in the Report which struck me, was that brief sentence which says that "there are some Ragged Schools in which it occasionally happens that we turn away from the door ten, and twenty, and thirty, not because there is not room for them in the School, but because there is no one to teach them." Oh, it struck me when I heard and read that, if any one of us were passing through the streets beside one of our great hospitals, and saw on some morning a whole group of sick and ill and afflicted persons turning away from the hospital, and we went into the group and asked them what was the reason of all this, and they said, "There is the building, and there are the beds which our poor wasted frames covet to lie upon, and there are the medicines which could heal our infirmities, and there are the instruments which could relieve our pain, but there are no doctors to use and to apply these things that are there;" why if that were to happen, the next morning it would ring through the length and breadth of England, and ere the night came upon us, many gentlemen of our noble medical profession would have stepped into the gap, to attend to those who were thus distressed. It does seem to me that this fact, this lack of labourers, is one that ought to ring through all our churches, throughout all our Christian homes, that it ought to come home especially to the hearts of young men and young women who are not engaged in this or similar enterprise, and it ought to fire them with a mission such as a shipwreck of a vessel kindled in the heart of Grace Darling, and when her father got into the boat, she leaped after him herself to grasp an oar and row over the wild and stormy waves, that she might bring to safety those who were ready to perish. I am not afraid of means, if we can only get men and women; if only the labourers are forthcoming, God will find means. The churches of our metropolis will surely rise to the occasion if it shall ever be said that there are men and women waiting to teach the ignorant, but have no room or appliances to carry out their benevolence. Surely there are some in this meeting to-night who will respond to this necessity; surely there are some here to-night who will vow to consecrate themselves to this great and holy work; surely those who have been devoted to it will will express their thanks to God by a renewed devotion to-night. But we have no reason to despond, but every reason to hope. I know full well that some of us may not reap the fruit of our endeavours; it may be given to us to do work, and not see the result. He that clears the land does not always reap the harvest. The husbandman who went forth in the dark and gloomy days of winter, and set the seed, though he has died and passed away before the glad days of spring lighted upon our world, and the song of summer birds was heard, yet he has not laboured in vain: the toil shall bring forth the fruit, and other hands shall reap the harvest of his labours; but, nevertheless, he shall have his pleasure in the good result; and if we only labour on, this soil will be found so fruitful that the prophetic image will surely become a reality; he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together.

The Rev. M'Connell Hussey then proposed the following resolution:—"That this meeting rejoices at the beneficial results hitherto worked out by Ragged Schools, and would urge upon the Committee now appointed to foster the movement in all its branches to the utmost of their power." He said:—I know full well, that many in this assembly know a great deal more about Ragged Schools than I do, and I should rather occupy the place of the pupil than that

of the teacher. But now what is my resolution? It is one that strikes the key-note of joy, and also places upon the Committee a very solemn responsibility. The key-note is that this meeting rejoices at the beneficial results hitherto worked out by Ragged Schools. The first part of the resolution has been thoroughly advocated: the second part, I am to urge the Committee now appointed to foster the movement in all its branches to the utmost of their power. Now I say, trust the goodness of your cause, and you will work well. Trust the instrument you wield—the word of God—the sword of the Spirit, which is just as bright and brilliant as it ever was. Grasp the sword, cast away the scabbard, and do the battle in the name of the Lord of Hosts. It is, my friends, the work of the Christian: it is the work of the philanthropist: it is the work of the patriot; for remember the word of the living God—"Righteousness exalteth a nation."

Mr. J. PAYNE, in seconding the resolution, characterised the Society's work as a combination for the circulation of information about education, and the realisation of expectation in the promulgation of the great salvation. The Ragged School movement had a good head (the noble Earl in the chair) and a firm tread; it was sensibly led, and it was life from the dead. Ragged School teachers must be persons who don't mutter, who don't stutter, who don't flutter, who don't butter, and also mean what they utter. Again, they gather in the masses, they form them into classes, they guard them against glasses (the girls against looking-glasses, and the boys against drinking-glasses), furnish them with passes—passes into nice situations, into the Church of Christ here, and upward and onward to the Church above. Mr. Payne concluded with his 2,379th tail-piece.

Foster the Ragged School *movement:*
Charity's claims among;
Foster its march of improvement,
Blessing both old and young!

Foster the Ragged School *Leader,*
Who has through hard work gone;
He is a powerful pleader,
If we have ever had one.

I have been trying to aid him,
Though in a humble style;
Knowing 'tis God who made him
On the good cause to smile!

Foster the Ragged School *Teachers,*
Working "whole lumps" to leaven;
Earnest and kind beseechers,
Pointing the young to heaven!

Foster the Ragged School *Scholars,*
Swarming the Schools within;
May they have *crowns* and dollars,
Plenty of *earthly* tin.

And through redemption's story,
When they shall come to die;
Crowns of *immortal glory*
In the bright world on high.

On the motion of Capt. JEFFERSON, seconded by J. HOLMES, Esq., it was resolved—"That this meeting greatly rejoices at the presence of Lord Shaftesbury, and earnestly prays that his health may be regained, strengthened, and continued, that for many years he may preside over his many and noble efforts for benefiting the poor of this country; and this meeting heartily thanks his Lordship for his presidency on this occasion."

Papers, Original and Selected.

RAGGED SCHOOL EXCURSIONS—PHYSICALLY AND MORALLY.

RAGGED SCHOOLS, from the very outset, have been properly planted in the heart of the dens and byways of our great cities. And is not this the right principle? For, by so doing, we only apply to a great social question that law of political economy which indicates that, in districts where there is no demand, there will be no supply. Nor have we any right to degrade a respectable district by bringing into it, even for a few hours, the scum of our pseudo-civilization. Indeed, if we did so, the evil would soon bring its own remedy; for destitute or outcast children will not, as a rule, attend any Ragged School which is out of their own district; and careful mothers are known to refuse to send their children to a Ragged School, solely because to reach it they would have to cross a road.

When we survey Ragged School districts, it is soon seen that, notwithstanding all the recent sanitary Acts, they are mostly dingy and dirty, and foul-smelling. Nearly every house is ill-drained, and still worse ventilated. Tenements decayed and ready to fall down piecemeal, or dirty and black with age, meet our gaze everywhere. On the surface of the water, when the butts are at all well supplied, which is rarely the case, we find a glazy oil floating, and strange fungi find a *habitat* on their sides. Foul smells, too, often cause nausea to those who are not acclimatized to these abominations, and they rush out of the district as if it were a city of plague. All these evils, and their name is legion, are but symbols of the moral corruption which make desolate these haunts of vice and crime. In fact, it is sometimes difficult to decide which is the parent of the reigning sins—the physical or the moral surroundings; for so closely are they allied, that each appears to be the offspring of the other.

Can we wonder, then, that, living as they do in a physical atmosphere like this, so many of our children are dwarfed in stature, or scarred by scrofula? Ought we to be surprised that, with such surroundings, Fever or Cholera claim myriads of victims every year?

Rather, we should infer that it would require a modern miracle to be wrought to keep away "the pestilence which walketh in darkness" from such horrible spots. But such an interposition we have no right to expect; for we can no more break the physical laws of the Creator with impunity, than we can disobey those moral laws which he devised for man's happiness. We should rather imitate Mahomet, who, when one of his followers said, after a weary march, "I will loose my camel and commit it to God," replied, "Friend, *tie* thy camel, and then commit it to God." So let us not expect our Creator to remove evils by a miracle, which we can do ourselves, merely by obeying those laws which he so wisely framed, and then we may, without presumption, ask his blessing on our efforts.

We are glad, then, when, by any means, we can get those youthful victims of parental or social neglect, among whom we labour, out of such plague-haunts, even for a few hours. They pine for fresh air, and they must have it, or fade and die. It is with this view that the "Ladies' Sanitary Association" has for some years organised Park-parties for Ragged Scholars. Under the auspices of this Society, the scholars are taken to the nearest park twice in the week during summer. The paid teachers are paid a small sum for this extra work. Toys are amply provided; those being selected which are calculated to expand the chest or to develop the muscles. Though no food is given, yet the children look forward as eagerly to this "march out," as do our volunteers. We have seen them thus gathered, after school hours, in Hyde Park and Victoria Park; and it gladdened our hearts to see their ruddy cheeks, their elastic step, and the lack-lustre eye brightened by the purer air, and the well-adjusted exercise. Perhaps their exhilaration might be regarded as excessive by a cynic; but we think that even a Diogenes would have felt somewhat excited if he had exchanged the air of a London "slum" for the pure air of Mars Hill. Thus a poor girl, aged twelve years, when remonstrated with on her undue excitement told us, "I never had a holiday in my life." No wonder she was giddy with joy, and displayed her delight in ways not customary to good society.

But something more than this is needed to *complete* a child-holiday. Good air is proverbially the father of a good appetite; and so to leave nothing wanting in a Ragged School holiday, little stomachs must be filled. This we are glad to say the bulk of our Schools manage to accomplish. This is done usually by a

special subscription, so that the funds given for educational purposes may be left intact. But not rarely, we are glad to say, this country treat is given by some friends of the School. Foremost amongst these good Samaritans are Sir W. H. Bodkin, Sir R. W. Carden, Mr. Hugh Matheson, and Mrs. Carr Glyn, who have for some years invited the children of the Ragged Schools in which they are interested to spend a day at their country houses. May many more be led to copy the precedent thus set!

But it is usually found, when the excursion season draws to a close, that there are some Day Schools too poor to defray the cost of such an "outing." For these a special fund has for the past twelve years been raised by the Ragged School Union; in which they have been kindly aided by a circular letter of Lord Shaftesbury. By this means nearly 2,000 of the poorest of the poor, chiefly from the eastern districts, are yearly taken by the railway to Richmond; and we think, of all the money placed at the disposal of the central Society, there is none from which greater moral and physical benefits are derived. Such an excursion it is intended to organize next month, if our readers kindly supply the means as readily as heretofore.

These excursions are not only beneficial physically but *morally*. Thus, the discipline of the Schools have been improved through the grateful feelings thereby evoked. Many parents, too, have felt that the teachers were real friends to their children, inasmuch as they spared no trouble to provide for their bodies as well as for their souls. In both cases, unmanageable children, and still more unmanageable mothers, have been curbed, and thus the lion has been changed to a lamb. For those who were too debased to appreciate Christian *discipline* readily understood Christian *kindness*

Again, how much of the *gentleman*, so to speak, has been brought ought of rough lads through these excursions! Thus, the strong are seen carrying the weak or sickly—cripples leaning on the stronger arms of their healthier companions; and children are not rarely found pleading for some one who has been excluded from the excursion for misconduct. Thus a lad, who was excluded from the Ogle Mews Excursion, walked or ran beside the vans all the way to Moulsey (about fourteen miles). When the donor of the feast heard of this, he interceded for the admittance of the culprit, which was granted, and O, the shout of joy which broke from his schoolfellows! There is not usually much

romance in a railway-ticket, yet our Ragged School Excursions by rail have often supplied incidents of courtesy and gentleness worthy of the days of chivalry, which, in spite of the dictum of Edmund Burke, are not yet dead. Thus a poor boy walked all the way from Epping Forest to Whitechapel, in order that a little girl, who had lost her railway ticket, might have his, and so not have to walk home. Surely, such a noble lad has all the elements of the true gentleman, and if the George Yard Excursion educed nothing nobler than this, we think that the cost and trouble were amply repaid.

But there is yet another benefit of these excursions which cannot be omitted in our review. Probably there is no country where social demarcations—that *caste*, without the name—are so marked as in England. We shall not discuss the question whether such stiffness and social angularity is consistent with Bible-teaching; for whatever our opinion on this question may be, every true Christian must feel, that whatever builds a bridge between those at the top and those at the bottom of society, must tend to the moral benefit of both sections. For thereby the rich are kept from the Cainite sin of saying, "Am I my brother's keeper?" whilst the "Have not's" are no longer tempted to envy or hate the "Have's." How often, during our united march through Richmond, have we seen the tear drop from eyes almost *iced* by conventionality; and kindly greetings were given to the poorest of the poor by those who before were too stiff or formal to recognise the poor save as "hewers of wood and drawers of water." Nor did the feelings thus excited evaporate in that mere sentimentality which, to use the words of Lord Byron about Sterne, "cries over a dead donkey, but leaves a loving mother to starve;" but baskets of fruit were sent out for distribution to the poor children by the occupants of the villas of Richmond. On one occasion, indeed, a gentleman gave us, money to convey the cripples from the park to the station. We doubt not, in all these cases the kind donors realised the truth of the Master's word, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

It is in this and other ways that "the rich and the poor meet together" on the same broad platform of humanity. For both recognise the Bible truth, "The Lord is the maker of them all," to the moral elevation of both classes.

THE JUVENILE SUNDAY BAND.

THE necessity for Christians uniting to further good works, and especially to suppress Sunday traffic, does not require any argument to enforce it. We have only to look around and behold the open public-houses, the Park bands, the crowded Zoological Gardens, and other scenes of Sabbath desecration, to infer that there is an absolute necessity for some means being adopted to stop this growing evil. The "Lord's Day Observance Society," "The Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association," and other kindred institutions have done much to render the Lord's day a day of rest, and we wish them "God speed."

A new movement, with the view of engaging the young in the Sunday Rest Movement, has recently been commenced: it is called "The Juvenile Sunday Band." The object of this Association is to create and sustain a permanent influence in the homes of the people in favour of a due regard and observance of the Lord's day, through the medium of the children of the various Sunday and other Schools. It seeks to accomplish its design by the following means, viz., by addresses delivered in the various schools, distribution of tracts, enrolling young persons under the pledge of the Society, and by illustrated lectures to children upon the Sabbath question.

The means employed is to get our young people to sign a pledge not to buy or sell on the Sabbath day, and that they will do all in their power with God's help, to promote a due observance of his holy day. Those who wish to become members, after receiving the consent of their parents, are presented with a beautifully-engraved card of membership, and a paper of hymns on the consecration of the Lord's day. The teachers are expected to see that these hymns are committed to memory, and occasionally sung in the schools that have taken up the movement.

The following is the heading of the Pledge-card:—

Juvenile Sunday Band

FOR

PROMOTING THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY.

The Parent Association is managed by a Committee composed of Christian men of various denominations. It does all in its power to encourage and foster branch associations in connection with it, and offers to all schools willing to take up the movement, copies of the rules, fifty blank cards of membership, and fifty hymns; besides this, it will allow other cards, &c., which may be required subsequently, at a considerable reduction. The Secretary, Mr. Frederick Clifton, 8, Canonbury Cottages, Islington, N., will render every assistance in this important work.

The "Juvenile Sunday Band" has as yet been confined to the northern districts of the metropolis, where it is flourishing very much; but it is now rapidly extending to other parts of this city.

We are glad to intimate that already 2,000 children have given their adhesion to the movement. Four Ragged Schools have already adopted the plan, namely, Britannia Row, Islington, the first branch formed; Hammond Square, Hoxton; Rufford's Buildings, Islington; and Fox Court, Gray's Inn Lane. Recently a Parents' Meeting was held at Hammond Square, when nearly 400 were present. On being asked how many would like their children to sign the Sunday Rest Pledge, every hand was held up in response.

One important benefit has already occurred from the movement. Thus a teacher writes:—"The annoyance of the children bringing fruit, &c., into the school became so great, that I had a book to enter the names of the offenders, who were many. Since the establishment of the Sunday Band, I have not entered *one name.*"

NEAPOLITAN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

Among the efforts that are being put forth for the regeneration of Italians in the south, special mention ought to be made of the Poor or Ragged Schools in Naples. The success of these institutions is well known to almost all Christian travellers who have visited that city. Among the many beautiful sights in Naples, there is perhaps none more cheering to a Christian mind than a visit to these schools, which are attended by so many of those sharp Neopolitan children, who give evidence, not only of their advancement in secular knowledge, but also in the truths of the Christian religion, which for so many ages was unknown in that city.

These Schools for Poor Children still continue to flourish, as may be seen from the following statistics:—The School which meets at Rue Cavone is attended by 96 boys. At present, on account of want of funds, there is no female teacher in connection with this school; but could a School for Girls be opened in that quarter, there is no doubt that it would be well attended. In the School which meets in Magno Cavallo, there is an attendance of 122 boys and 54 girls. The Asilo Garibaldi, or School held in the Chiaja, numbers 40 boys and 65 girls. In addition to these, there is a fourth Evangelical School, attended by about 120 children. This shows about 500 poor children under Scriptural instruction. Had the committee the funds, other schools might easily be opened in other parts of the city; and if similarly conducted, would effect similar results.

This is not a work, however, which is unaccompanied with difficulty. priests and nuns are most active in their endeavours to lead the childre away from these schools, and get them once more entangled in their old superstition.

Already one good has sprung out of these schools for the children of the Lazzaroni; for, some have not only become evangelists to their families, but to the public at large. Thus we find that the colporteurs, or Bible hawkers who now go about selling Bibles in Italy, have enlisted some juvenile helpers, who are very zealous in their efforts to promote the sale of the Holy Scriptures. A small tray, or wide basket, such as a boy can carry, is fastened by a strap over their shoulders, and is furnished with copies, and they go through some of the streets, holding up the blessed Book, and crying, "Buy the light—the true light!" The precious treasure has been withheld from the people of Italy for many centuries, but they are now buying it gladly. In one year 32,000 copies were sold through the agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

In this way these children are fulfilling the ancient prophecy, "Out of babes and sucklings Thou perfectest praise." It is by this means alone that Italy can really become free; for, as the illustrious Garabaldi once said, holding up the Bible, "This is the cannon to liberate Italy!"

In Memoriam.

MR. JESSE CROOK, OF GRAVESEND.

Mr. Jesse Crook, who died at Gravesend, on April 29th ult., aged 44, was a man respected, not only for his worth as a public man, but also as a private Christian. As a Christian he threw his whole heart and soul into all work for the good of souls, especially among the poor. Chief and foremost with him was that of the Gravesend Ragged School, which, at the time of Mr. Crook's becoming a member of the Committee, was held in a very small room wholly unfit for the purpose, and the income was about £20 per annum. Mr. Crook, with others, felt that it was desirable that a new building should be erected to accommodate the increased number of children, and with great tact and energy on the part of our friends, it was set about, and the town canvassed. In the year 1862 a new School was erected at a cost of £800, since which there has been added a Soup Kitchen, at a further cost of nearly £200, and the income of the Institution in all its branches has risen to between £200 and £300 per annum. The erection of the new School and its success in all its branches is attributable in a great measure, under God's blessing, to our deceased friend, who was, at the time of death, Superintendent as well as Treasurer. He felt the importance of Prayer Meetings, and would often remark that the School had been erected through the power of prayer. He had a great love for this work, and was ever anxious for the welfare

of the School. Shortly before his death, speaking to the Assistant-Superintendent of the School, he said, "Go on as you have gone on; tell the teachers to be united—tell them to remember the man and the bundle of sticks, impress upon them the importance of being real, for without reality what would it be with me now? and the same reality in religion will bring the same comfort to the parents and dear children, when they come to this. Give my love to all the teachers, tell them I thank them for their help, not that they have done it for me, but because it is God's work."

Mr. Crook was for some years the active Superintendent of the Sunday School at Perry Street, about a mile from Gravesend. He was in the habit of walking there every Sunday morning and afternoon; his failing health compelled him to give up this school in the summer of last year. Mr. Crook was, until lately, a member of the Provident Relief Society, which was raised greatly by his energy to do a good work in relieving the very poor in time of inclement weather. He was, also, on the Committee of the Gravesend Town Mission.

One of the last works that Mr. Crook was engaged in was that of assisting in the erection of the Northfleet Mission Room. Northfleet is two miles from Gravesend, and a great many poor people reside there. A missionary was stationed there by the Home and County Mission, but he had no place for the people to meet in. Our friend acted as Treasurer, and threw himself heartily into this work, and about fifteen months since he had the satisfaction of seeing a new building opened, and which had cost about £500. There remained a debt on the building which he was very anxious to see cleared off, and about three months since he was able to say, "It is done." The people of Northfleet attribute the success of this institution, under God's blessing, to the hard work of our friend.

A Christmas Dinner for the Poor was started by Mr. Crook about three years ago. On Christmas day last, about 800 poor people had a good dinner of roast beef, plum pudding, potatoes, one ounce of tea, and a loaf of bread supplied to them at the Ragged School, and carried by them to their homes. The whole expense, about £100, was voluntarily sent to Mr. Crook in answer to his appeal.

The last act of our friend was to make arrangements for the settlement of a Bible Woman to visit the homes of the children of the Ragged School.

The Rev. B. H. Kluht, in his address at the grave, thus referred to Mr. Crook's death-bed: In the last interview I had with our dear departed friend, he gave utterance to these words—and they may be taken as the key of his life, for remember this, that whilst he sought to benefit men's bodies, his chief and great concern was for their spiritual interest—"I feel I have not loved Christ as I ought; I would that I could feel more of his presence at this time," and he then concluded with the words "Underneath me are the everlasting arms."

In his public capacity Mr. Crook was one of the Town Commissioners, and for three years Chairman of the Board of Guardians. In both these offices he brought to bear great tact and energy.

As a private Christian, Mr. Crook's example will live in the memory of all that knew him. As a worker in the Ragged School and other religious causes, his zeal, self-denial, and perseverance will never be forgotten. And as a

public man his courage and independency will be a stimulus to those engaged in the affairs of the town.

Mr. Crook has gone down to his grave deeply lamented by all, but at the same time there prevails a spirit of thankfulness that he ever lived.

RESCUED AND GRATEFUL.

When we reflect upon the great importance of education, it is inconceivable how any parents can suffer their children to grow up uncared for and untutored, while so many excellent means of instruction are so easily to be obtained. There are, unhappily, parents to whom the spiritual and temporal welfare of their children is of no importance; but there are some hard-working and loving parents who would fain see their children grow up well-instructed and godly, but who have as yet neglected the means of their doing so.

In order to show how great is the advantage gained by a child who has been early sent to school, I will relate a little incident of which I can vouch for the truth, and the subjects of which have only lately come under my notice for the second time. Some years ago, I met two little boys in the street who asked me for charity, and were so miserable and wretched in their appearance that, contrary to my usual practice with street beggars, I bestowed a trifle on each. On inquiring into their circumstances, I found that the pitiful story they had at first told me was true. It was the old tale of want, misery, and crime: the father a drunkard, the mother a hopeless invalid, with four young children to support, besides the two I had seen. The mother gladly gave her consent to allow the two eldest boys to be placed at a school for such poor destitute ones, near London; and having seen them safely deposited in their new home, I left them to the care of kind teachers, who knew well how to reform and cultivate the degraded minds of poor London children. Some months afterwards, I thought again of my little *protegés*, and went to the school where I had placed them. The teacher smiled when I inquired after the little boys, whom I described as being ill-looking and dirty in appearance, and summoned, to my great surprise, two bright-looking boys, who spoke to me cheerfully and seemed most happy and contented in their home.

In due time, the youngest, having shown a remarkable aptitude for music, was sent out as a band-boy in a vessel bound for India. The eldest, I sent out to a friend in Australia, from whom I received, from time to time, excellent accounts of the boy.

I had almost forgotten my young friends, when, one evening last summer, I was told a *gentleman* waited to see me. What was my astonishment, on requesting him to be shown in, to behold a handsome, well-dressed, young man, who declared himself to be George Brown, the younger of my former acquaintances. After giving me an account of his successful career as a colonist, and expressing his gratitude for the help I had given him, he rose, saying, "I can never, sir, repay you the tenth part of what I owe, but in money, at least, I will no longer be your debtor," and, placing a cheque for ten pounds on the table, he left the room before I could stop him. My astonishment was great, but my thankfulness to God was still greater, that he had suffered me to be the humble instrument of so much good to these poor friendless boys.—*Mother's Friend.*

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK—WEST AND SOUTH.

From Mr. Hytche's Fourteenth Annual Report, we make the following extracts as showing the nature of his work and the state of the Ragged Schools in the Western and Southern districts:—

In the united divisions, there are 84 Institutions, or 78 Schools and 6 Refuges.

Last year I paid the following

VISITS.

Sunday Schools	76
Day Schools	328
Night Schools	207
Refuges	25
Special and Conferences	86
Local Committees	13
Public and Social Meetings	20
Parents' Meetings	17
	772

Last year the following schools were opened:—

1. Short Street, Lock's Fields.—A Ragged School was conducted in this building some years ago, but it was removed to White Hart Court, Walworth Road. The character of this district has altered for the worse; so that, if a Ragged School were ever needed, it is especially required at this time. This has led some new friends to occupy the old building, with much success. The following are the operations now conducted:—A Sunday Night School attended by 150; a Week Night School, attended by 45; and a Band of Hope.

2. George Yard, Redcross Street.—This school is planted in the very heart of the notorious Mint, Borough. The following operations are carried on:—Sunday Night School, attended by 120; Week Night School, attended by 40; a Mission Service; a Girls' Industrial Class; and a Penny Bank.

3. Salisbury Row, Lock's Fields.—This School is planted in the midst of a dense population, more destitute than criminal. The building is too small for large operations; but the Committee are in search of premises wherein to carry on their labours on a larger scale. The Sunday Night School is attended by 70; but were the room larger, the attendance would be speedily doubled.

4. Lansdown Place, Kent Street.—This school had been in abeyance for about two years. Through some legal flaw the premises could not be transferred to other trustees, and they were in a very dilapidated state. After having been thoroughly repaired, Mrs. Russell reopened the Day School last year. The attendance is 120. A Sunday Night School was also opened in November, with an attendance of 120, taught by 20 teachers.

It is satisfactory to know that the Christian zeal which first started the Ragged School Mission has not yet died out. Hence, year by year the machinery employed has been extended, and is mostly worked vigorously.

Some of these extensions are the fruit of your Agent's advice; and the cases are few where his opinion as to the need or the mode of working has not been sought.

The following is a list of last year's Extensions, namely, 8 Sunday Schools, 2 Day Schools, 5 Night Schools, 5 Penny Banks, 5 Clothing Clubs, 6 Bands of Hope, and 4 Boys' Industrial Classes.

To work this machinery there are 1,430 voluntary teachers and 129 paid agents. But, as above 130 of the voluntary teachers only profess to teach in Day or Night Schools, the Sunday staff is reduced to 1,300. Of these about 970 attend every Sunday. The bulk of the remaining 330 teachers, are not merely nominal ones, but, acting on the system of relays, they only attend twice in the month. Many of these are engaged in ordinary Sunday Schools in the morning and afternoon.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

are held by 72 Institutions. In addition, ordinary Sunday Schools are held in 7 buildings rented by Ragged School Committees. Of these Sunday Schools, 27 meet in the morning, and are attended by 1,300 scholars; 48 meet in the afternoon, when 4,750 attend. The 45 Sunday Night Schools are attended by 6,689.

As a means of getting the Day Scholars to attend the Sunday School, I have requested the paid teachers to test such attendance every Monday morning. I also occasionally test such attendance, and, when needful, address them collectively or individually on the subject. The teacher of Horseferry Road, in addition, registers such attendance every Monday.

In the course of these inquiries, I found that some scholars belonging to Broadwall and Cottage Place attended a Unitarian Sunday School. In concert with the paid teachers, your Agent used his influence to get them to attend Sunday Schools where the cardinal doctrines of the Divinity of Christ and the atonement are asserted, and in this he succeeded.

The order of most Sunday Night Schools is better than might be expected from the class who attend. There is less sly throwing, down of forms shouting across the schoolroom, and kicking with the feet. Yet there is much room for improvement in many schools.

Senior Bible Classes are still found to be a powerful agency in keeping up the connection of elder scholars with the school. There are now 29 of such classes, with upwards of 500 members. This, as compared with my Report for 1866, shows an increase of 13 Bible Classes. From these classes teachers are often selected when the staff is insufficient; and cases are often mentioned where these classes have not only been instrumental in deepening religious impression, but in conversion.

Forty-four Sunday Schools statedly conduct Teachers' Prayer Meetings. At many of these, elder scholars are invited to remain, when occasionally they are specially addressed. At one, Fitzroy Market, I found 80 present. At most I have attended, the conduct of the scholars has been all that could be desired; and, from private conversation with many, there can be no doubt that they regard it as a great privilege to attend the Teachers' Prayer Meeting.

DAY SCHOOLS

are held by 53 Institutions. In addition cheap Pay Schools are held in 10 buildings devoted to Sunday or Night Ragged Schools. The Ragged Day Schools may be thus classified: 8 Girls', 10 Boys', 39 Mixed, and 17 Infants'; or, 74 distinct schools.

With above 11,000 on the books, the daily attendance is 7,856. As it is usual to reregister the scholars either monthly or quarterly, those on the books may be regarded as real and not as nominal scholars.

Surrey Row was opened as a Day School in July last. It is attended by 180 scholars, the bulk of whom I found on examination had not attended any Day School. *Lansdown Place*, after being closed for two years, was re-opened last June. It is attended by 120. *Fitzroy Market* Day School, after being closed for three months, was reorganised under a new and efficient teacher. As a result, the attendance advanced from 65 to 160, all of the right class.

The number that pass through our Day Schools is a crying evil. For example, Butler Place, with an average of 168 scholars, registered 816 last year. So above 1,000 passed through the George Street School in 1867. This evil is partly due to the migratory habits of the parents; but, unhappily, the wicked indifference of the mothers tends to the same result. Ofttimes too, the elder scholars pass from school to school, so that where Ragged Schools are thickly planted, as in Westminster and Kent Street, they attend every school in rotation, especially when a treat is expected. I have endeavoured to check this evil by requesting the teachers not to admit scholars from other Day Schools, without some adequate cause; say, for instance, the removal of the parents into a district nearer the new than the old school. This personal intervention has sometimes prevented disunion between teachers in contiguous Day Schools.

As heretofore, I have continually watched the character of the class admitted. Thus during the past year I investigated 64 cases in 17 Day Schools, when 23 were excluded. Some of the doubtful cases proved to be the children of sweeps, navvies, thieves, and costermongers, their apparent respectability being due to the tidiness of their mothers, or to their being clothed with cast-off clothes given by relatives in good situations. In the excluded cases the mothers whom I saw, said, "Teacher of pay school beat my child;" "The National School is too distant;" "Anybody has a right to come who chooses."

In 20 Day Schools monitors are employed. In 16 others there are competent paid assistants. These paid monitors are fitted for their work by regular training lessons. They are mostly models, as respects civility, industry, and kindness. They serve an important purpose; for when the teachers are ill there is no need to close the school, as they carry it on satisfactorily. Thus, when the earnest teacher of New Tothill Street was away ill three months, the infants, above 100, were committed to their care, and they conducted that section to the general satisfaction.

Though my editorial duties rendered a formal examination of the Day Schools impossible, yet the character of the secular and religious instruction was carefully watched. Various suggestions for improvement in "method'

were made and usually adopted. The plan of learning a daily text is now more generally adopted. The plan I suggest is, that a different text be taught for the first four days, and that the four texts be repeated on Friday. The amount of textual knowledge may be inferred from this, that the George Street scholars repeated to me 100 texts, including whole chapters. As I constantly ask questions when these texts are repeated, I am glad to report that most know the meaning, as well as the words. The Gray's Yard scholars are encouraged to repeat these texts to their parents.

NIGHT SCHOOLS

are held in 61 buildings. They may be thus divided: 33 Boys', 22 Girls', and 20 Mixed Schools, making 75 distinct Night Schools. The nightly attendance is 3,814, but there are about 5,700 on the register.

It is still a subject of regret that the majority of our Night Schools are not aided by volunteers. However earnest may be our paid teachers, they cannot be expected to teach more than a certain number, and thus they are tempted either to lower the age, or to exclude that rougher element for whose benefit Night Schools were primarily intended. Here it may be intimated that 11 Night Schools are conducted solely by voluntary agency, and 10 more are, more or less, so aided. This leaves the large number of 40, or two-thirds, without such aid. It seems to me that, however injurious in Sunday Schools, the plan of relays might be properly introduced into our Night Schools. For it could scarcely be expected that volunteers would devote three or four nights to secular instruction, whereas eight might be induced to devote one evening in the week to such a work, two attending in regular rotation.

Last winter, the Night Schools were, as a rule, marked by unusual order. The cockney Irish element in some of these schools has not decreased; but though as vivacious as ever, they are well disciplined. On the other hand, a scene I witnessed in Kensal New Town cannot be omitted. From the rough element which abounds in this district, no boy is admitted unless he is nominated by one of the Committee. On November 11th, whenever the door was opened, several "roughs" rushed in, knocked down the forms, and wanted to fight the other scholars. It was not until, on my advice, the master sent for the police, that they rushed out in a body stamping and shouting. The people in the cottages which abut on the school were in evident terror. Here, if anywhere, volunteers are needed.

I am glad to report that a larger number of our Night Scholars attend Sunday School than was formerly the case. Whenever I address them collectively, and not unfrequently *individually*, I press this on their attention, with satisfactory results in many cases.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

There are 10 Boys' Industrial Classes, with 155 members. There are, also, 48 Girls' Industrial Classes, with 2,622. Sixteen of the Girls' Classes meet in the evening.

During the past year Industrial Classes have been formed in Pear Street and Lant Street. In addition to tailoring and shoemaking, the boys of Exeter Buildings are now taught carpentry. In addition to plain needlework,

cooking is taught in several schools. They are usually engaged in soup-making, in some cases, for sale.

SANITARY.

The health of the scholars was, on the whole, better than I have known for some years. But, in November last, 50 were absent from measles at Nightingale Street. Three died of fever in Cottage Place, and 56 were absent from small-pox at Exeter Buildings.

Here a reference must be made to the sanitary evils involved in over-crowded schoolrooms. There are some schools usually attended by one-fourth more scholars than the schoolroom can properly accommodate. Not only is proper classification thereby rendered difficult, but the rooms smell so foully that not rarely visitors are afraid to remain. To remedy these evils Nightingale Street has been enlarged, and the wall of the infants' room heightened. Portland Town and Paradise Walk occupy larger and better lighted and ventilated premises.

Among the *external* sanitary evils which affect our scholars, the recent encroachment of railways must be mentioned. The small houses, or rather hovels, of Bayswater, Notting Hill, and Westminster, were always over-crowded; but since the removal of a large number of houses for railway purposes, those who remain in the district crowd into the houses still standing, so that they have become nothing less than fever dens.

Through my efforts, I am glad to say, large filters have been presented to six Day Schools.

The Park-parties organised by the "Ladies' Sanitary Association" have, undoubtedly, conduced to the health of our scholars. Taken twice per week in summer into the nearest park by their teachers, the scholars look forward to the walk as a great treat, and that though no refreshments are provided, but only articles for physical exercise.

The "Children's Dinner Society" have used several Ragged Schools for this purpose. The dinner of Irish stew costs the Society about fourpence, the child paying one penny.

BANKS AND CLOTHING CLUBS.

In my districts there are 34 Penny Banks and 45 Clothing Clubs. It would appear that 65 schools have either Banks or Clubs, whilst 25 have both. Ten of these were established last year, some at my own suggestion: and I have every reason to believe that they are working well.

When the Post-office Banks were opened, it was expected that our Penny Banks would have declined. But they are as much needed as ever, for, unlike the Post-office Banks, they take less than one shilling, some even a farthing at a time, and there is less difficulty found in obtaining deposits when needed.

PARENTS' MEETINGS.

In my districts there are 37 Mothers' and 3 Fathers' Meetings. The former have 900 members, and the latter 235, including the large Working Men's Club connected with Perkins' Rents. I visited and addressed several of these last year. One of the most pleasing was the Annual Social Meeting

of the fathers and mothers of Church Place, Paddington. Above 300 were present. Most of the men and many of the women are employed in the dust yards, or on the canals. Several of these have become communicants.

Ragged Churches or Mission Services are conducted in 36 Ragged Schools. The aggregate attendance is 1,600, or 44 per Ragged Church. By request, I addressed the parents of Noel Street and Brook Street on Sunday evenings, when a large number attended; and I have reason to believe that as one result, those services have been better attended.

BANDS OF HOPE.

In my district there are 13 such gatherings, with about 1,200 members Six of these were opened last year. As the intemperate habits of their parents is the cause of much of their poverty, I doubt not that a moiety of our schools would not be required, were habits of temperance formed.

WEEK-NIGHT BIBLE CLASSES.

I have already stated that there are 29 Senior Bible Classes, with about 500 members. In addition to this, the voluntary teachers of Maida Hill devote half an hour of their Week Night School to Bible instruction. The friends at Doughty Street have carried out this plan still further, with marked benefit to the elder scholars, for two large Bible Classes, under competent teachers, are successfully conducted in a separate room once a week. Were this plan generally adopted, I cannot doubt that not only the Bible knowledge of our scholars would be increased, but that religious impressions would be deepened. At the same time, those voluntary missionary teachers whose aim is to save rather than to socialise, would readily engage in a work so thoroughly evangelistic.

SUMMARY.

As usual, much of my time was occupied by special business. Among other results the following may be mentioned:—

1. *Nightingale Street.*—Through my suggestions to the earnest teacher the infants' attendance much increased. This led to the enlargement of the schoolroom, both in area and height. The Girls' Night School being thinly attended, led, on my advice, to a change of teachers, and already the attendance has increased about two-thirds.

2.—*Jurston Street*, an old School, and *Mansfield Street*, a new one, have opened mixed Night Schools, attended by 155. For nearly eleven years your Agent tried to induce the late managers of Jurston Street to open a Night School, but in vain; but the new managers were scarcely installed in office when they made this needful addition to their operations. Both schools are solely and effectively conducted by volunteers.

Surrey Row has opened a Day School, which is attended by 180 scholars, the bulk of whom had not attended any Day School. Having advocated at a public meeting the opening of a Day School, and given £5 from a fund at Mr. Gent's disposal, this led to £22 10*s.* being collected at the meeting, and the necessary funds being provided to start a Day School.

Robert Street, on my advice, now meets four times instead of twice weekly, and does not close before nine, instead of at eight, as formerly.

Druid Street Night School meets now at seven, instead of at six, and a master is employed instead of the Day School mistress, as formerly.

Hinde's Mews Committee has been reorganised. The accounts will in future be regularly audited, and the Night School, which has been much neglected, will be aided by a Visiting Committee, as I suggested.

Lansdown Place.—Agent attended a special meeting for prayer and conference. As a result of the addresses, twenty persons offered their services, and a Sunday Night School, attended by 120, has been opened.

Ogle Mews.—In consequence of removals and other changes, the staff became so reduced that numbers of children were refused admission every Sunday evening. Agent attended a Social Meeting, at which 120 were present. As the result of his address, and that of other friends', 11 regular and several occasional teachers have given their services, and this old and valuable school has revived.

LORD SHAFTESBURY AND THEATRE PREACHING.

THE Annual Meeting of the Committee, Managers, and Stewards in connection with the Services in Theatres and Music Halls, was held at Freemasons' Hall, on Tuesday evening, May 19th. The Earl of Shaftesbury, who presided, said that—

They had to overcome a great many difficulties and prejudices. They had succeeded in overcoming them, and the theatre services were now accepted far and wide, and their utility generally acknowledged. But, strange to say, at that moment there were wise and sagacious personages who could not bring themselves to be satisfied with, or to partake in, the services at the theatres, showing that prejudice and bigotry were not confined to the poorer and uneducated classes. This called to mind the words of the good old minister, Howells, who went preaching in all places about the country, when he received a severe castigation from his bishop for preaching in unconsecrated places. "Unconsecrated! unconsecrated, my Lord! When the Lord Jesus Christ descended from heaven and set his feet on this earth, he consecrated to himself every inch of the habitable globe." There was not a spot on the earth where they could not preach Christ; there was not a spot where they ought not to preach Christ, and he believed they were the men to say there was not a spot where they would not preach Christ. Their friend Mr. Sawell had given very good reasons for the acceptance of their services by the great masses of the people, and it was one of the most remarkable signs of the enduring power and the searching power of the gospel that they had got together such large congregations. Had they been brought together by music, by lights, by incense, or by vestments? No; he believed that if those appliances had been attempted they would not have had the one-thousandth part of those who flocked together with such animation and delight to hear the Word of God. It was true that as the people would not come to the churches and chapels, they went down to them; as they could not raise them at once to their level, they went down to theirs. They consulted their prejudices and even their bigotries, and they were bound so to do; for having neglected them for so many years, it was their duty to set aside all fastiousness, and go down to the lowest depths to see if they could not drag them out of the mire by the light of the gospel; and by the blessing of God this had been accomplished. The preachers had truly and forcibly represented the truths of the gospel; they had consulted the true feeling of the people, and adopted the

right mode of preaching, taking as their model the preaching of our Lord himself. There was not a doubt the time was coming when the large mass of the seething population of London would form one of the most intricate subjects for the statesmen. Their theories, their fancies, their wrongs, and their rights would all come in one huge bubble to the surface. There was no security except in the gospel. They might make whatever other provisions they chose, but the great primary principle must be the diffusion of the gospel of Christ. It was the only salt to the earth, the only conservative principle in politics and society, the only thing that would give them peace in their time and security for generations to come. The noble chairman concluded by hoping it would please God to spare them, for many years to come, to meet and receive such accounts as they had received that evening, and exchange mutual sympathies and encouragement in that work which, although it might not appear great on the platform or in publications, was the noblest, and those who were engaged in it were engaged in a greater work than the highest statesmen or the most distinguished orators of the present day.

Mr. SAWELL, the Secretary, having tendered his personal thanks to all those who had assisted in the work, said the past winter was the ninth in which they had carried on these services. At first they were only started as an experiment, but the experiment had been so successful that each winter the Committee had no alternative, in face of the success, but to carry on the services. Since the commencement they had held 1,231 services, with an attendance in round numbers of 1,700,000. It seemed to him that the success the Committee had met with in bringing the working classes so largely under the influence of gospel truth had arisen, first, because without any single exception in the 1,231 services held, they had had only gospel truth preached to them; and that was no small thing in these days, when multitudes were providing what he should certainly feel inclined to call Sunday evening concerts for the people. They could not be accused of that, for their music as a rule was not on a par with the preaching, although at some of the places the musical arrangements had been efficiently carried out. They had succeeded, secondly, because this gospel truth had been delivered in good plain English, and in a thoroughly earnest and simple manner, and because, further the preachers carried out the example of the great Divine Teacher, of whom it is said, "And without a parable spake he not unto them." And in that way the truth had laid hold of the great masses of the working classes. The attendance during the past course had been somewhat affected by a wet winter, for from the last Sunday in November to the second Sunday in February they had had an extraordinary succession of wet Sundays. Notwithstanding this untoward circumstance, the Committee had had 204 services, attended by 180,000 persons, in the following buildings:—1. Metropolitan Music Hall; 2. Amphitheatre; 3. St. George's Hall; 4 Victoria Theatre; 5. Sadler's Wells Theatre; 6. Pavilion Theatre; 7. New Standard Theatre (for 15 Sundays only).

Mr. GEORGE MOORE said, that at the time the services were started, many of his friends in the Church of England did not see their way to preach in the theatres, but he was persuaded in his own mind that they were wise and judicious proceedings, and he was one of the first to put his name down on the Committee. Now the work did not require any advocacy from him, as it had the support of the bulk of the Evangelical clergymen of the Church of England and of all the Dissenting ministers. He then went on to show that the support they had received on all sides was far greater than they could ever have expected; and referring to Lord Shaftesbury, he said that the position they had attained was in great measure owing to his lordship, for if he had not backed them up when all others opposed them, they must have given way.

Poet's Corner.

THE ANGELS' CHOICE.

Sound the trumpet, weave the garland, for the bravest and the best
Hero of a hundred battles, noblest hero of the west!
We will crown him all our own, courteous as crusading knight,
Gentle to the fallen foeman, shield of chivalry and right.
Never was there such a hero; king and people plaudits blend,
Blessing monarchy's defender, honouring the people's friend.
Angels hie to yonder city, where the voice of pæan song
Mingles with the shout and timbrel rolling all the vale along.
Call to join the radiant legion him *you* deem the greatest, best,
Worthiest of a world's acclaim, worthiest of the conqueror's crest.

To a straw-thatched hut they sped: there upon a lowly bed
Lay a palsied poor old man, on his brow the death-dew shed;
He had walked for many a year in close communion with his God,
Shared the sufferings of the poor, lightened many a heavy load,
Spoke in sorrows ear of One who came—the Way, the Truth, the Life,
Reconciled the long estranged, quenched the newly-kindled strife.
Grandeur scorned him, Folly mocked him, Pride, indignant, passed him by
But the angels of the Highest watch to see the old man die,
Bear him to the starry portals, tell of him to millions there,
Of the fairest and the bravest, none they found so brave and fair.

See beside the rich pavilion, and the glittering couch of State,
Pomp, with drapery of gold, and a hundred vassals wait,
Genial feast and softest lyre,—all to charm the ear and sight,
Song of bard and beauty's charm, blend to minister delight.
Suddenly the song hath ceased, blanch the cheeks of love and pride,
For the Lord of high estate on his banquet couch hath died.

Near the mansion of the dead, stands a thatched and ivied dwelling,
From its chamber, clean and neat, sweetest song of praise is swelling;
Crust of bread, and cup of water, sanctified by faith and prayer,
And a heart that trusteth ever in her Saviour's love and care,
And a covenant sealed with blood, hand of time can ne'er destroy,
Tune the widow's heart to sing melodies of holy joy.

But the angels, as they hover o'er the world of grief and sin,
Sometimes bend above the palace, fold their wings and enter in,
When they see beneath the purple throb a meek and lowly heart,
And a tear of holy sorrow from the burdened eyelid part,
Hear the prayer that God would heal suffering earth of sin's diseases,
See the look of sweet affection meet the brotherhood of Jesus.

More than king, and more than hero, deem they him who stoops to share,
For the Master's sake, the sorrows and the shame his followers bear;
Stoops from proudest height, communion with imprisoned saints to hold;
Counts the glory of the cross more than pomp of pearl or gold;
Looks beyond the flight of time, march of system and of sun,
To his being with his God while eternal cycles run.

G. PAULIN.

Teachers' Column.

ILLUSTRATIVE TEACHING.

IN studying the life of our Lord, says the *Freeman*, as recorded by the Evangelists, we cannot fail to notice his frequent use of anecdote, illustration, or parable. We are told by one of the Evangelists that in teaching the multitudes, "without a parable spake he not unto them." By the same means, most of the great truths of the gospel were conveyed to the minds of his disciples, and even in his addresses to the proud Pharisees and learned scribes, we observe the same abundant use of illustration. If we carefully study the writings of most of the great popular teachers, whether sacred or secular, of our own or other lands, we shall discover to what a great extent they are indebted to the use of illustration, anecdote, proverb, or parable, for their success. The most popular of our modern preachers is rich in his stores of illustrative anecdote. The most acceptable speakers at our anniversary meetings are those who are best furnished with appropriate illustrations of the truths they wish to convey. We cannot doubt, therefore, that the judicious use of illustrative anecdote is an invaluable aid to the Sunday School Teacher.

But careful observation has taught us that teachers very frequently make a most injudicious use of this mode of teaching. We have heard a teacher relating a story to the children of such excessive length that it has occupied nearly the whole of the time allotted to the teaching, and we have no doubt before the end was reached the children had forgotten the commencement. We fear, too, that teachers sometimes adopt the very unwise plan of telling an anecdote simply with the object of gaining the children's attention, and not because it will illustrate the truths contained in the passage of Scripture under consideration. Such conduct is injurious in many ways; it is a waste of time, it lowers the teacher in the estimation of his scholars by exposing his lack of thought, and instead of the subject being illustrated, it becomes darkened by words without wisdom.

Illustrations should be employed very cautiously; it requires almost as much skill to use them as to teach without them. They should always be simple, not above the comprehension of the children, but adapted to their mental capacity and time of life. Never use an illustration that is calculated to make the children laugh: nothing is more destructive of the authority of the teacher, nothing more opposed to that impressiveness which ought always to accompany the teaching of the Word of God. If teachers will copy their divine Master in this particular, as in all others, they cannot go wrong. The birds of the air, the flowers of the field, the sower sowing the seed, the great world of nature, and the occurrences of every-day life were all employed by Him "who spake as never man spake" in teaching the great truths of the gospel.

But never do we find him using illustrations above the comprehension of his hearers. All his parables are pointed, appropriate, and full of meaning. Let teachers copy his example.

HOW MUCH WORSE WITHOUT.

One of our English princesses, when her tutor, a bishop, said to her, "I find that my instructions have made you but little better," replied, "Ah, but my lord, you do not know how much worse I should have been without them!"

When tempted to think, Ragged School Teacher, that the children in your class are not any better through your instruction, ask yourself the question, "How much worse would they have been without it?" For though you may not always harvest your class in heaven; you may be assured of this, that you will save them from much vice, and probably from a career of crime. For if they are what they are *with* your earnest teachings, you may well ask—What would they be *without?*

Editor's Note-book.

THE DESIRE TO SAVE SOULS.

The passionate desire, says Guizot, to save human souls, is a force born and developed in the bosom of the Christian religion, and in that alone. Men are not, they never have been, struck as they ought to have been struck with the beauty of this passion, or with its novelty in the moral history of the world, or with the part that it has played among Christian nations. Before the era of Christianity, in times of Asiatic and European antiquity, pagans and philosophers busied themselves about the destiny of men after the close of their earthly life, and with curiosity, too, did they sound the obscurity. But the ardent solicitude for the eternal welfare of human souls, the never-wearying labour to prepare human souls for eternity—to set them even during this existence in intimate relations with God—we have in all this a fact essentially Christian, one of the sublimest characteristics of Christianity, and one of the most striking marks of its divine origin. God constantly in relation with mankind and with every man, God present during the actual life of every man, and God the arbiter of his future destiny; the immense value of each human soul in the eyes of God, and the immense import to the soul of the future that awaits it: these are the convictions and the affirmations all implied in the one passion alluded to. This passion for the salvation of men's souls, was the whole life of our Saviour Jesus Christ. It passed by his example and by his precepts into the life of his primitive disciples, and amidst the diversities of age, people, opinions, has remained the characteristic feature and the inspiring breath of the genius of Christianity.

MEN WHO LIVED TO SAVE OTHERS.

Ragged School teachers and all earnest Christians ought to have intense yearnings to save lost souls. They are "labourers together with Christ" for this end, and they cannot look for success unless they have some approach, in their experience, to the feelings of Jesus, who came to seek and save the lost. The following examples are worthy of imitation.

It is said of the learned John Smith

"that he had resolved to lay aside other studies, and to travail in the salvation of men's souls, after whose good he most earnestly thirsted."

Of Alleine, author of the "Alarm to Unconverted Sinners," it is recorded that "he was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls; and to this end he poured out his very heart in prayer and preaching."

Bunyan said, "In my preaching I could not be satisfied unless some fruits did appear in my work."

"I would think it a greater happiness," said Matthew Henry, "to gain one soul to Christ, than mountains of silver and gold to myself. If I do not gain souls, I shall enjoy all other gains with very little satisfaction, and I would rather beg my bread from door to door than undertake this great work."

Doddridge, writing to a friend, remarked, "I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly than for anything besides. Methinks I could not only labour, but die for it with pleasure."

Children's Gallery.

LITTLE BLIND JIM.

VISITING a Ragged School, the superintendent turned my attention to a little boy who was bending his head earnestly towards his teacher, as if eager to catch every word she said.

"Why," said I, "that little fellow seems to be blind." His eyes, I noticed, were almost closed.

"That is so," said the superintendent; "he is almost entirely blind, yet we have no scholar more eager to learn, and none better behaved. I wish you to notice him particularly. He is a very interesting child.

"And now," said he, "I'll give you in a few words the story of his blindness. Little Jim was playing with gunpowder, which he and some other boys were endeavouring to explode. Little Jim put his face down to blow the match, when it went off, and terribly disfigured his face and put out his eyes. Imagine the distress of his parents when their poor boy was led in lacerated and blind.

The little sufferer bore it patiently, and the doctor was in daily attendance. But no light came to his eyes. There he sat in the corner hopelessly blind. At length, after trying every means in vain, the doctor said, 'I can do no more: the case is beyond my skill.' The poor parents' hearts sunk within them. But the little patient had been to a Ragged School, and had there learned some very important lessons. Among these was the fact that Jesus opened the eyes of the blind. 'Well,' said he to himself, meditating on his forlorn condition, 'if Jesus cured blindness *then*, why can he not *now*? What the doctor can't do, Jesus perhaps, will do.' And so faith began to stir in that little heart.

Little Jim, in carrying out this faith, went into one corner of the room and knelt down, and in a low tone is heard to say, 'O Lord Jesus, when thou wast on earth thou didst make the blind to see. Have pity on me, a poor blind boy, and open my eyes. The doctor has tried and can't. O Jesus, open my eyes and have mercy upon me. Amen.

Hearing this little pensive prayer, the parents were tenderly affected, and added their hearty amen, not supposing, however, that it would be of any avail. But their unbelief did not make the faith of little Jim of none effect.

The boy seemed to expect that his prayer would be answered. He said to

himself, 'Jesus has commanded us to pray; to ask, that we may receive. He won't say no to my prayer.' So he seemed to be greatly comforted. His gloom passed in a measure away, and his darkened face seemed lit up with the smile of hope.

After weary days and weeks had gone by, gradually there came a faint streak of light, and Jim began to work his way around without the helping hand. He could now see a little. By and by he could see a little more, until at length he resumed his place in the Sunday School, where," said the superintendent, 'you may see him.' Of course I looked at Jim with increasing interest. I watched his countenance, observed the interest he took in his lesson as given through the ear instead of the eye, noticed the varying expression of his face, and said to myself, "There is a beautiful illustration of the power of faith."

Sweet is this example to all children who are sufferers by disease or by accident. When the parents and the doctor cannot help them, let them imitate the faith of little Jim, and look to Jesus. And oh! let all who are blind of heart——the worst kind of blindness—go to Jesus, and say, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened." None but Jesus can cure soul-blindness.

"Oh, that all the blind but knew him,
And would be advised by me,
Surely they would hasten to him;
He would cause them all to see."

Our Library Table.

Speeches of the Earl of Shaftesbury. London: Chapman and Hall.

ALTHOUGH in the form of speeches, this volume may be regarded as an epitome of the life-work of one who would not have been less a true nobleman had he not worn a coronet. It is, in fact, a narrative of those social reforms which have made the past thirty years so memorable in the history of our country. For, from the year 1838, when Lord Shaftesbury told the tale of child-slavery in the factory districts, down to last year, when he revealed the horrors of the "Agricultural gauge," there is no great social reform in which he has not taken a leading part, and few, indeed, of which he may not be regarded as the parent.

It is only needful to cite some of the subjects of these speeches, to show how diverse have been the objects of inquiry, and how great the labour entailed by their examination. Thus, among the subjects embraced are—"The Ten Hours Factory Bill;" "Children in Mines and Factories;" "Sanitary Legislation;" and "Lodging-Houses for the Working Classes." Amongst those in which we as Ragged School workers are specially interested, are the following: "Emigration and Ragged Schools;" 'Homeless Boys of London;" and "Refuges for Homeless Boys." Each speech implies much prior personal labour; for it is not customary for Lord Shaftesbury to depend upon mere *hearsay*, when he can personally examine the facts. We, who have had the honour of co-operating with Lord Shaftesbury in Ragged School and Refuge work for many years, know that he is no mere platform orator, but that he is as much at home in the vile dens of our great cities as he is at the council-table. It is this which has placed his social reform labours on a sound basis; for he speaks because he

knows. Thus it is that Lord Shaftesbury's family motto is but the symbol of his life—"Love; serve."

Need we say, now that these speeches are collected in a handsome volume, that we think no library can be regarded as complete which is without this summary of thirty years spent in the service of those who needed a true friend *outside* their own class.

Little by Little. By GEORGE MATTHEWS. London: Washbourne.

THIS little work gives a lucid summary of the "why and because" of Penny Banks. It is written by one who has had many years' experience as the conductor of the Penny Bank connected with Exeter Buildings Ragged School. It contains rules for the management of such institutions, which will prove especially useful to those who are novices, but who think of starting a Penny Bank. As the subject is well and fully treated, we have great pleasure in recommending this little work to our readers.

Notices of Meetings.

CHEQUER ALLEY.

THE Annual Meeting of the Hope Schools for All was recently held. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided. The Report traced the history of the Sunday Schools back to 1822, when they were commenced in an adjoining alley. In the present building in Chequer Alley, they have been carried on nearly eighteen years. Last year considerable efforts were made for the extension of the mission, and in addition to the Sunday Schools, Week-night Schools, Penny Bank, &c., already in operation, Day Schools were opened, Sunday and Week-evening Services commenced, and a Bible-woman was engaged to visit in the district; a Mothers' Meeting, under the superintendence of a ladies' committee, was also established, and a Band of Hope commenced. About the end of last year, the use of a portion of the school premises was granted to the East London Relief Committee, for the establishment of a Sewing Class for the poor women of the district, several hundreds of whom have for some months past been employed, and many of them taught needlework. The sum earned weekly at this class has been a great boon to many of the unemployed women of the district. Dinners to the destitute children attending the schools have also been given two or three times a week, numbering 10,000. The attendance at the Sunday Evening School for some months past has exceeded 450.

The meeting was addressed by the Revs. R. Glover and A. McAuslane, Dr. Macaldin, and Mr. H. R. Williams.

MAIDA HILL.

THE Twenty-second Annual Meeting of the friends and subscribers of the above institution was recently held Lord Ebury, who kindly presided, spoke of the great advance made within the last twenty-five years, in Christian effort for the benefit of the lower classes. He expressed his conviction that the influence exerted by Refuges and Ragged Schools is the most valuable of all the agencies employed, as striking at the root of the great social evils existing in this great city, by training the young and raising them from the degradation in which, humanly speaking, they must otherwise inevitably be brought up. He wished that the wealthy inhabitants of the West-End of London would see how much

they would gain personally by giving of their substance, and of their leisure time for the benefit of their poorer brethren in less favoured neighbourhoods.

The Report gave an encouraging account of the useful works carried on by means of this institution. The boys in the Refuge and Industrial School had earned in the last year nearly £250 profit, after payment for materials, by paper bag making and printing; and a larger work had been done in the schools than in any previous year. There had been a falling-off, however, to the large extent of £130 in the receipts, which seriously crippled the Committee, which is desirous of extending the premises so as to accommodate a larger number of Refuge cases.

Mr. F. S. Clayton, in addressing the teachers, said that *preaching* teachers, who could only be induced to work by being allowed to give frequent addresses, are not those who do the most good. A patient continuance in well-doing, buoyed up with the assurance that the continual dropping of earnest, living teaching will not lose its reward, effects the greatest amount of good in the long run, both to scholar and teacher. Another important work was to follow up the history of the children brought under the influence of such institutions, so that that influence might be lasting and beneficial, both temporally and spiritually.

Mr. Amos exhibited a list waistcoat made by a poor woman, and presented as a free will offering to this school. The noble chairman was so pleased with this illustration of the widow's mite that he bade £10 10s. for it; at the same time saying that anyone present was at liberty to make a higher bidding.

SURREY ROW.

The Third Anniversary of this school was recently held. Mr. Collinson presided. The Report of the Committee stated that arrangements were made for opening a free Day School in July last; and on the recommendation of the Inspector of the Ragged School Union, Miss Swift, formerly teacher at the Harrow Street Ragged School, was engaged. Though at first she met with some severe handling from a few roughs, the undertaking has proved a success. The work was having a very great effect on the deportment of the girls and boys. The attendance at the Sunday Morning Service by the children was very gratifying, and the number of boys and girls attending the Prayer Meetings after the Sunday School was very large. The Mothers' Meetings were much appreciated, and the Committee had been able to recommend some as charwomen. The winter Evening School had not been so well attended as the Committee could have wished, and they accounted for that by the opening of a Day School and the scarcity of teachers. The Sunday School attendances averaged, for 1867-8, 73; ditto Service, 86; Afternoon School, 211; Evening ditto, 200. Day School, from July, 1867, to 31st March, 1868, number on the books, 256 average attendance, 167. The amount paid into the Penny Bank was £19 18s. 10d. The amount withdrawn was £17 7s. 7d. The Report then detailed what had been effected during the past year, and concluded by inviting all who were interested in the work to pay an occasional visit to the school, and offer up their prayers that God may cause his face to shine upon it in the future as he has done in the past. The disbursements were £126 5s. 6d., leaving a balance in hand of 3s. 6d.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. Dr. Carden, J. Amos, W. Curling, Mr. E. J. Hytche, and Messrs. Bristowe, Glanvill, and Hadland.

Papers, Original and Selected.

LITERARY SEWAGE.

If we survey society at any specific period, we find that some special form of moral or social evil is dominant. Sometimes these evils are confined to adults, but not rarely they seriously affect our juveniles. In the latter case they cast a black shadow over the future, and are almost prophetic of that social ruin which must be the ultimate outcome, unless Christian man, Bible in hand, combat with, and conquer, the reigning evil.

Probably the most prominent and powerful of all the evils which now affect those destitute or outcast children among whom we labour, is the recent inundation of juvenile thieves' literature. From what we notice in our visitation of the districts where Ragged Schools are planted, we are sorry to indicate that this evil is not only gigantic, but growing. For we cannot glance at the windows of the newsvendors' shops in the bye-ways of London without seeing that they are flooded with tales of successful burglary, arson, or murder. Songs, too, both foul in sentiment and coarse in language, fitly supplement the gallows literature thus vended to juveniles. The whole tells that a moral darkness, which may be felt, prevails in those dark districts.

At a recent visit to New Cut we copied the titles of the serials unblushingly displayed in the windows. These are some of the titles:—"Cartouche, the French Robber;" "Sixteen-string Jack;" "Tales of Highwaymen;" "Tom King, or the Road;" "Claude Duval, the Highwayman." When we read these titles, we could not help thinking that, over the shop-front these words ought to have been inscribed—"Literary Sewage sold here!" And surely of the two an undeodorised sewer is preferable; for whilst the one can only kill the body, the other will murder the soul.

But, as if to further stimulate the bad passions of fallen humanity, these serials are illustrated with staring engravings, where all the hideous incidents of murder are depicted, the idea of the editors evidently being the more frightful the picture the

greater will be the sale. Round these pictures we usually find groups of children in earnest talk. What are they saying? Listen! They are discussing the details of the various crimes with zest, or clubbing their farthings to buy this moral poison. Not rarely may children be seen sitting on the doorsteps of the "slums," eagerly reading these hideous tales to those who are too poor to buy them. Their wide-open mouths, glistening eyes, and rapt attention, show that the very soul is rioting in this moral sewage.

Nor is this the worst spectacle which meets our gaze in the London "slums." In the notorious Kent Street, Borough, there is a shop, the windows of which are filled with a serial the staple of which is guilty love. A foul engraving forms its frontispiece, thereby poisoning eye as well as heart. Yet round this we have often seen not only juvenile thieves, but little boys and girls congregated, all luxuriating in this literary sewer. When the woman who keeps this shop—alas! a wife and a mother—was remonstrated with on her sin, she only replied, "I sell them because people like them!" Surely in a case like this, if the police did its duty Lord Campbell's Act would be at once enforced.

A still more evilly influential print is dedicated to the police courts. To render this weekly catalogue of crime more attractive to juveniles, there are large engravings, in which burglary or murder are depicted with every frightful accessory. The shops which sell this pestilential paper are supplied with broadsides, on which five or six of the most "sensational" pictures are re-produced, and this we find pasted on the window as an advertisement. There are always crowds of boys and girls round these horrid pictures. The following indicates the character of these pictures, and of course the nature of the contents, for in this case the *out*side is a true type of the *in*side:—The pot-boy at Norton Folgate beating in his mistress's head with a rolling-pin. The pot-boy in the centre is supported by vignettes of a ruffian at Brighton braining his wife with a hatchet; a Somersetshire farmer shooting his wife, and such like. If the week does not furnish English horrors enough, recourse is had to the Continent, as in a late number, where a Romish priest, having cut off the head of the girl he had seduced, was represented burying her in the reeds by the river side.

Can it then be wondered at that mere children—soul-poisoned by this literary sewage—turn such terrible pictures into as hideous

facts? Ought we to be surprised that London has recently been startled by crimes to the person, perpetrated by mere boys, from which manhood recoils in dismay? Nay, would it not not have been wondrous if such crimes had not sprung out of this gallows literature? It has already been the case with one nation. For there cannot be any doubt that the general popularity of "tales of rogues and rapparees" has caused that spirit of lawlessness which makes England garrison Ireland as if it were a conquered country rather than a sister state. Nor can England think to escape the same penalty, if it continues to feed our juveniles with the same devil's food. For if we sow thistles, we shall, by an inexorable law, *not* harvest grapes.

A few recent cases may be cited to show the fruits of this moral contamination. Thus the chief of a band of juvenile thieves said in palliation of his crime, "Me and some of my pals have been and read Jack Sheppard, and thought doing a robbery a *game* thing." Thus, too, several boys of a higher social grade, after reading the tales of noted highwaymen, formed themselves into a gang, naming themselves "Blue-skin," "Dick Turpin," "Claude Duval," with the intention of sustaining the special character of each robber in his own person. So a painter's apprentice, sixteen years of age, was committed for trial upon four charges of burglary. The prisoner resided with his uncle, and on his lodgings being searched a large quantity of stolen property was discovered, also a pair of pistols, some skeleton keys, a powder-flask with shot in it, a dark lantern, a sword, a dagger, a chisel, and a screwdriver. When placed in the dock the prisoner treated the charges with the utmost indifference, and evidently looked upon himself as a kind of hero. He had intimated to his companions that he intended to become as famous as the renowned Jack Sheppard.

Again, a lad of fifteen has just been tried at the Surrey Sessions for an offence directly traceable to the influence of this boy-thief literature. He was employed at Messrs. W. H. Smith and Sons' book-stall at Surbiton; he stole about £25 from his masters, and ran away. To account for his disappearance he wrote an extraordinary letter to the manager of the stall, in which he made no secret of the robbery, but spoke of the folly of pursuit, as he was on his road to France. He meant to return the money in three months' time, but meanwhile he wished to have no noise made about it, as he was a useful member of society. This letter was signed "Captain Claude," and at the end of it the manager was

told to "beware." The boy was captured at Portsmouth, where for a few days he had lived at the rate of £500 a year. Amidst the odd jumble of revolver, pocket-book, pawn-ticket, cigar-holder, &c., which were found at his lodgings, and which always constitutes the "luggage" of such boys, was a well-thumbed copy of "*Paul Clifford*," and another novel of the same stamp. The lad, who was very impudent in the dock, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and four years in a reformatory. It will clearly be some time before the Pure Literature Society will have to sit down and weep at having no worlds left to conquer.

We should, however, much misapprehend the true facts of the case, if we supposed that this rioting in literary sewage is confined to the bye-ways of London. There are few newsvendors' shops in respectable districts which do not display them for sale. Nay, we cannot glance at the daily press without perceiving that this rage for sensational tales, in which all the ten commandments are violated, infects the classes which lead society. Nor indeed is the religious press free from this blot on their principles. For a glance at their advertising columns shows that religious romances are sent forth by shoals, the bulk of which, being only *caricatures* of real life, necessarily unfit their readers to cope with the moral and social evils by which they are surrounded. Such romances may stimulate sentiment, but they will never train true Christian workers, who are too much surrounded by real miseries to need pictures of imaginary ones.

All these facts—and their name is legion, for truly they are many—show that something must be done, and that at once, to check the further distribution of such moral sewage. For it is not too much to say that this kind of literature tends to *un*do much of the work we are, by God's grace, doing among the wild tribes of our great cities. It is for the classes among whom we as Ragged School workers labour, that these tales of crime are mainly written, and it is among them that thieves' literature chiefly circulates, And we know, not only from their surroundings, but from their natural excitability, that they are the very persons speedily to translate the imaginary incidents into literal fact.

But how to prevent the further circulation of these tales of horror, or of positive crime, is a problem difficult to solve. A censorship—as in the case of the drama—would scarcely suit the national idea, especially as it would be quite possible, were a Ritualistic or Popish Government ever to come into power, that

the law would be used to suppress evangelical books. This was done in the bad old times of the Jameses and Charleses, as it is even now done in those priest-ridden countries Rome and Spain. Nor is this all; for we could not allow the circulation of such romances as "Paul Clifford," and "Jack Sheppard;" for, written as they are by authors of literary repute, they may be regarded as the parents of the thieves' literature now so popular. For we could not suppress the penny guide to thieving, and yet permit the thirty shilling apotheosis of highwaymen to pass by unnoticed. Nay, we think their influence for evil the worst of the two. We have yet to learn that Edmund Burke's dictum was correct, "Vice loses half its evil by losing all its grossness," since experience tells us that *veneered* sin is always more enticing and destructive than when seen in its naked deformity. And we may be certain of this, that vice in the highly-placed will descend to the lower classes—the vice probably deepening into crime. That national sin, horse-betting, is already an example of this result.

The only steps yet taken by the authorities to check this evil is that recently adopted by the Shropshire Bench. Thus the *Oswestry Advertiser* says that the Shrewsbury magistrates have instructed the police to warn, and if that should have no effect to summon, persons who sell publications like the *Illustrated Police News*. It would be well if the precedent thus set were copied by the magistracy generally; for even if it did not stop the sale of such publications, it would at least tell the writers and publishers that they were watched—and thus fear might do what morality and religion have failed to accomplish. But in the case of the erotic serials, it is clear that no new enactment is needed, the Act of Lord Campbell being adequate to suppress periodicals which only minister to the lowest passions of fallen humanity.

But true Christians have also a duty to perform, if they would save the lambs of Christ from the prowling wolf in these last days. Thus, as one antidote to literary sewage, which is as contaminating to the soul as *un*deodorised sewage is to the body, we think that persons might be employed to visit shops vending thieves' literature, and to remonstrate with the proprietors. But as they are the chief culprits, the publishers ought to be visited by persons of influence. As respects the vendors, City Missionaries, who do so much to circulate healthy literature, might prove very serviceable, for they might show the shopkeepers, not only the crime of which they are guilty, but the penalty which sooner or later must follow,

if they persist in a course which threatens to dissolve the bonds of society.

But, at the same time, specimens of a healthier class of juvenile literature should be shown to the newsvendors. By this, we do not mean serials altogether religious, but those in which—with a due attention to Christian doctrine—secular subjects are treated in a religious spirit, and whereby the temporal is made a stepping-stone to the spiritual. There are happily many such magazines, though probably not so well supported as they ought to be by those who recognise the claims of the young on the Church.

It is solely with this view, and not as a mere commercial speculation, that the Ragged School Union has for the past eighteen years published *Our Children's Magazine*. Nor has the work been in vain; for the cases are many where, through the benediction of God, it has not only proved an antidote to the moral sewage described, but has deepened piety, and rendered youth of both sexes true to the great obligations of life. Thus has it confirmed the old truth that if we fill the soul with Christ's wheat, there will be no space left for Satan's chaff.

CAIRO RAGGED SCHOOL.

We have often referred to Miss Whately's work in Egypt with pleasure. It was in the winter of 1860-1, that Miss M. Whately set on foot an effort to collect the neglected and ignorant children of Cairo into a Ragged School—the first attempt which had ever been made in that city to work directly among the Moslem part of the population. She gathered around her a few children, going out herself into the streets and lanes to seek for them, and with the assistance of a respectable Syrian Protestant woman (now labouring as a Bible Woman in her own country) began to instruct them in her own house.

This small and humble effort has prospered by the good hand of our God; and now at the end of seven years, the small room, with a dozen or two of ragged girls seated on a mat, has been gradually exchanged for a school of between ninety and a hundred of all ages and denominations (though the Moslem girls are rather the most numerous). They assemble in two large airy rooms, and receive instruction in the Scriptures fully and plainly taught, though no abuse of their respective religions is allowed among any scholars, nor *distinctly* controversial teaching given.

The head class receive English and geography lessons, and all are instructed in reading and writing in their own language. Needlework and embroidery occupy the afternoons, and some elegant specimens of the latter have been admired by English visitors. The change in the manners and habits of the girls is as great as could be possibly achieved in a daily school;

and though under the circumstances it would be too soon to look for evidence of decisive conversion to God, it is encouraging to be assured that many of them are able to give clear and distinct answers on the leading points of Christianity. The seed is sown, and it is for God to give the increase.

A Boys' School was commenced in 1865, and now numbers more than 100 boys, many country parents actually sending their sons to board with friends in the city for the sake of the advantages enjoyed in the School. The teacher of reading and writing is a Moslem, but the Scriptural instruction is given by two Syrian missionaries, the Messrs. Shakoor, who also carry on general mission work both in Cairo and its neighbourhood. They visit throughout the city, make missionary tours in the country, and keep a book depôt, where Bibles, Scripture portions, and Christian books are sold and distributed. Miss M. Whately herself visits the women in her neighbourhood, and occasionally those in the country. This work, which is growing daily more extensive and important, entails necessarily heavy expenses, and the resources within reach are quite insufficient to meet them. We can only commend the work to Him whose is the silver and the gold, and under Him to those whose hearts He may move to contribute to this effort to introduce the Gospel to those so long in darkness.

The Turkish correspondent of "Evangelical Christendom," thus bears his testimony to the value of this the first Egyptian Ragged School. He says, —"I spent some time in them and examined some of the classes. There were both boys and girls, many of them Moslems, about 150 in all, and instruction is given in the Bible, in Arabic, Turkish, and English, in arithmetic, geography, needlework, &c. As far as I examined the classes they appeared to be remarkably familiar with the Scriptures and with their studies. The whole influence of the school is certainly favourable to the spiritual as well as intellectual improvement of the scholars, and the half-dozen well-worn Arabic Bibles on the table in the room where visitors are received in the evenings, gave evidence that that influence was not confined to the children. The teachers are Syrian Protestants, educated in the American mission-school at Abeih, in Mount Lebanon, but everything seemed to be under the direct superintendence of Miss Whately herself. She is evidently the mainspring and the life of the whole educational work which she has undertaken."

In Memoriam.

MRS. SARAH VANDYKE.

In our last number we sketched the life of a voluntary teacher, we now give that of one of our paid teachers.

Sarah Millest was born in 1845, and lost her father by cholera when only

four years old. Her mother had a large family to bring up, and Sarah had very little schooling; she was engaged in knitting hair nets, and afterwards helped her mother at shirt work.

About four years ago, the Bible Woman, and a few Christian friends in the humbler walks of life, commenced a small Sunday School in the Mission Room, Bateman's Row, Shoreditch, and Sarah willingly took a class. One Sabbath, as she was entering the Mission House, a young friend, interested in the School, said to her, "How can you teach the children, if you are not a Christian yourself?" These words made a great impression, and she often feared lest the children should see her spending the rest of the day in an inconsistent manner, and for some weeks she was very anxious about her soul, longing to know her sins forgiven.

The Bible Woman sympathised with her, and pointed her to Jesus. One Sabbath evening, when a Mission service was held in the small school-room, as they sang together a hymn, the words of the chorus particularly arrested her attention—

> "I do believe, I can believe, that Jesus died for me;
> That on the cross He shed His blood, from sin to set me free."

To use her own words—"I thought, 'I do believe, I can believe, that Jesus died for *me*.'" And, as she realised this blessed truth, such joy and peace filled her soul, that she could never forget it. This lasted for weeks, and she longed that others might know it, though she could not tell them of the happy change. "I cannot think how any one can go back, or how their love to the Saviour can grow cold, if they have felt as I did." I was much struck with the great pains she took in improving herself in writing, and she said, "I have got on so wonderfully in everything since I was converted."

In the autumn of 1865, a few friends, interested in the neighbourhood of Shoreditch, commenced a Ragged School in the Mission Room. Many were the prayers offered for guidance, and that a teacher might be engaged who would care for the best welfare of the children. One was highly recommended, and the School opened, but we feared we had not one whose great desire was to lead the children to Jesus. The following week the teacher stayed away, and sent a note resigning her place. We did not like to disperse the children, so sent for Sarah Millest, asking her to take them for a few days, till we could meet with a regular governess. She was very fearful, but consented; our great difficulty was her being a poor scholar herself; and after school was over, I used to hear her read and spell. But time went on, and as we could only accommodate fifty children, she was able to manage them very nicely.

One day she spoke to me on the subject of prayer; asking, "Should school be closed with prayer daily?" I said, "I cannot lay down any rule. If you really want the Lord's blessing on the children, kneel down and ask it; but on no account do it from form." I shall not soon forget the few simple words she offered the first time I heard her: "Lord, teach me how to teach these children. Make them lambs of thy fold." From that time I knew all would be well.

On moving to our present premises in New Inn Street, we tried if she could still conduct the School; and those who have visited it must have been

struck with her kind, gentle manner, and great tact with the children. Sometimes rough boys would come down the court to throw in mud or stones; she would go to the door with a smile, and ask if they wanted anybody, and they would hang down their heads, look ashamed, and walk away. She had over two hundred children under her care. We have had our discouragements, and have not known what to do with troublesome children; but prayer was the great resource. She would pray—"Lord, give me patience with the boys: teach me to be kind and loving, and lead them to Thee." And her prayers were heard and answered.

In the early spring of 1867, she was married to Mr. George Vandyke, but she wished still to continue teaching; and as he was engaged in the City all day, her time was at her own disposal. Often she would say, as he left her for the day, "Oh, George, pray for me, that I may be made a blessing to the children, and lead them to the Saviour." Soon after her marriage, I took tea in her new home, when she was evidently very happy. Our conversation naturally turned on the School, and I asked if she knew a young woman suitable for a teacher. On my mentioning one, she said, "Yes; she is a Christian." I said, "But that, though the principal thing, is not all: she must have an aptitude for teaching." "Oh, miss, a Christian can do anything." Wishing her to express her sentiments, I said, "What do you mean?" "Why, if we pray, God will help us—He *does*. Last week, two of the monitors were to be away. I did not feel well, and I quite dreaded the morrow, wondering how I was to manage. But I prayed to God to help me, and in the night I still kept praying for the School; and the next day everything was so easy—I never knew the children so good before."

Last Christmas we gave a holiday, and the treat was to be early in the new year; but "man proposes, and God disposes." And much grieved were we to hear a very poor account of Mrs. Vandyke's health. She was often delirious and would talk about the School, mentioning the children by name, among others a little cripple in whom she was particularly interested. She did not herself expect to get better, spoke of her inability to pray, and of the comfort of having found her Saviour when in health, saying, "I have nothing to do now; I am in God's hands." One day her husband asked if he should read to her, but she seemed too much exhausted, and said, "I am only waiting for the Master to call me." The doctor, however, after a fortnight of great anxiety, pronounced her out of danger. Her husband, taking leave of her for the night, said, "Good-by, dear; Jesus is very kind and very near to you." To which she assented. After passing a quiet night, she said to her mother, "I have had a beautiful night; I am better." She then complained of faintness; and before her husband could reach her bedside, her spirit had fled!—gone home!

The Sabbath after her death, some of the elder children, their teachers, and the Bible Woman, went to take a last look at her, and very affecting was the visit. The children stood sobbing round the coffin, while a gentleman spoke to them of meeting her in heaven. They then all knelt down, as prayer was offered for a blessing on them and on the School. In the evening her husband heard a ring at the bell, and going to the door, he found six children waiting. "If you please, sir, may we see teacher?" Two of them had been up in the afternoon, and had shown the others the way, as they

wished once more to gaze on her they loved. The funeral took place at Bow Cemetery, and was the most affecting scene I have ever witnessed. Besides the immediate relations and friends, about forty of the children and many of their parents attended. A short service was held in the chapel adjoining, which was crowded; and as the children went to the grave, they sung one of the last hymns their dear teacher had taught them—

"Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so."

But several of them were quite unable to sing, and sobbed the whole time.

Thus, before she was twenty-three years old, the young wife, mother, and teacher, was called to the still happier home above. A useful life seemed before her: a happy home, a sweet little babe only a fortnight old, and work for Jesus, in which she delighted; nevertheless, to depart and be with Christ was far better. We see not as God sees; but it is an unspeakable comfort to know that "He doeth all things well."

SAVED FROM A BEGGAR'S LIFE.

In the middle of December, 1866, about one o'clock in the day, as the rain was descending in torrents and a cold wind blowing, a gentleman was hastening along Holborn in order to escape the storm, when his eyes fell on a boy and girl shuffling along the street, nearly wet through, and making their way eastward. They looked hungry, forlorn, and weary, yet they seemed bent on reaching, if possible, some shelter; yet no one heeded them until they attracted the attention of the gentleman before alluded to. They passed him, but he was so struck with their melancholy appearance, that he was compelled to turn round and follow them. He soon overtook them near Day and Martin's, and tapping the lad on his shoulder, said, "Have you no home, my boy?"

"No, sir," was the reply.

"Would you like one?"

"Yes, sir, very much indeed."

"Who is this little girl with you?"

"She is my sister."

"How old is she?"

"Thirteen last July, sir."

"Would she like to go to a home too?"

"Oh, yes, very much."

To escape the rain, no further conversation passed. The gentleman gave the boy the address of a Refuge, and off they started and were soon at the door. The bell was rung, and in a few minutes they were sheltered from the rain and cold, in Great Queen Street Refuge.

The account given by these unhappy young creatures, was that their mother died six months before at Cardiff, and not long before her death she told them that she had received a letter informing her that their father, who was a sailor, died at sea; and now these two helpless ones were left

orphans. Their mother was buried at Cardiff, and after the expenses were paid, a few shillings were handed over to the children. They were strongly recommended to go into the Union, but the little girl had such a horror of that place that she would not go, and they resolved to try a life of begging. Various places had been visited, and now they were trying their fortune in London; but they had not succeeded here, and all their little gatherings chiefly went in paying sixpence for their night's lodgings, in one of the common lodging-houses in the east of London. The day when they were met, only a piece of bread had been their meal. The poor lad when told he would be kept in the Refuge, and his sister would be provided with a home too in the Girls' Refuge, expressed his gratitude, and said, "I don't know what we should have done when the snow came on the ground!" Poor things, they might have been in the grave before then if they had not found refuge in this Institution.

What an appeal is this to all who can sympathise, but especially to those who have little ones, and know not what may be the fate of their offspring, should they themselves be called away. Help then these Refuges, and while doing so hear the Master saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

OUR PAID TEACHERS' HOLIDAY.

After another twelve months' hard work, our paid teachers had their annual "outing" on Saturday, July 4th. This is the fourth time that the Committee of the Ragged School Union have invited these earnest men and women to spend a day with them in the country. And we who know, from daily intercourse with them, how faithful they are to the great work given them by God, think that money well spent, which gives them the opportunity of leaving the noisome "slums" and sad scenes amid which they labour even for one day. They at least breathe air as the Creator made it, before man spoilt it.

As at the last two gatherings, Bushey Park was selected as being most accessible by rail, and as possessing the greatest variety of objects to interest. Nearly 300 were present, including many of the committee and the officials of the Central Society. The day was all that could be wished; the north-west wind effectually blowing away some of the smoke and foul odours of "auld Reekie." We need not say that the pictures of Hampton Court were well criticised by the artists—and we have some amongst our number—that many merrily lost themselves amid the famous "maze," whilst many "boys," as Mr. Gent called them, wielded the bat at cricket, and the girls were equally expert at croquet.

To the excellent dinner and tea provided, the teachers did "ample justice," as the penny-a-liners say. After tea, a few earnest words were spoken by Mr. W. Locke, Mr. Watts, and Mr. Miller. The following piece, composed for the occasion by Mr. W. H. Miller, was then sung:—

Hail to this joyful day, when we once again meet,
Fellow-labourers in concord and love,—
To train up the poor, not for this world alone,
But to mansions of glory above.
Let then our motto be—
Union and harmony.
To train up the poor, not for this world alone,
But to mansions of glory above.

Hail to him who presides, mid the cares of his rank,
Yet still stoops to the lowliest mind;
Each teacher in him feels a father and friend,
With a voice and a look ever kind.
Let then our motto be—&c.

Hail to all the Committee, who each do their best,
Thus to comfort and cheer on our way;
Not alone then, on this happy meeting will we,
But when absent, for them ever pray.
Let then our motto be—&c.

Hail to each Boy and Girl, that we meet in our Schools,
Unnoticed, uncared for by some,—
Yet led in the paths of true holiness here,
May be gems in the kingdom to come.
Let then our motto be—&c.

Hail to One above all, who in His holy Book
There has taught us what Teachers to be,—
And sends through His Son this command to us all,—
"Let the little ones come unto me."
Let then our motto be—&c.

After the thanks of the paid teachers had been given to the Committee by acclamation they returned home, making their homeward march vocal with holy song—all refreshed, body and soul, and so the more fitted for their arduous labours.

THE SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK IN NORTH LONDON.

THE following particulars we have extracted from the report of the School Agent (Mr. Curtis) engaged in the Northern and Eastern districts of the metropolis.

The following visits have been made:—

Day Schools	480
Evening Schools	308
Sunday Schools	99
Parents' Meetings	12
Committee Meetings	3
Refuges	20
Public Meetings	10
Special Conferences	40
	972

In previous years the destruction of entire neighbourhoods was reported. This year the destruction has been comparatively small. The Holborn viaduct and the Inns of Court have displaced to some extent the dwellings of the poor.

The deterioration of neighbourhoods will result from the poor crowding into quarters having a respectable exterior. As a confirmation of this it was stated recently by a minister at a public meeting, that he had been surprised to find houses regarded as the dwellings of the middle class tenanted by the very poor, whole families in many cases occupying but one room, so that we must not be surprised at finding children coming to our Schools from very unlikely quarters.

NEW, EXTENDED, OR RESUMED OPERATIONS.

Chequer Alley, St. Luke's, Day School and Band of Hope; Cable Street, Whitechapel, Sunday and Evening School; Mercer Street Evening School; Vinegar Ground Sunday Evening School; York Place Home and Shoeblack Brigade; Britannia Row Library and Juvenile Sabbath Observance Association; and Milton Yard Library, 400 volumes; Bedfordbury Sunday Afternoon School and Evening Service; Elder Walk Adults' Bible Class and Adults' Secular Class; Camden Town Sewing Class; Lamb and Flag Thieves' Class; Goulston Street Sewing Class; Stepney Band of Hope. *Resumed*:—Sermon Lane Evening School extended one evening and paid teacher; Kentish Town Boot Club; Moreton Road Sunday Morning School and Adults' Class; Smith's Place Bible Class; Ernest Street, one evening voluntary effort; Colchester Street Adults' Class:—Total 25.

TEACHERS.

Two have died, the master of Lamb and Flag and the master of Spicer Street, both eminently Christian men and valued servants. One teacher, the excellent mistress of Charles Street, Drury Lane, was unfortunately drowned while bathing.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS—NORTH AND EAST LONDON.

Number open in the morning, 38; attendance, 3,047; afternoon, 69; attendance, 8,800; evening, 54; attendance, 8,700; voluntary teachers, 1,850, average attendance, 1,270.

Cable Street, Whitechapel (new effort), Sunday Afternoon School, attendance, 35; Bedfordbury (new effort) Sunday Afternoon School, attendance, 65; Vinegar Ground (new effort) Sunday Evening School, attendance, 50; Moreton Road Sunday Morning School, attendance, 60. The teachers of which are the fruit of the School and Mission work. Sandwich Street; the Sunday Afternoon School for Elder Girls has increased from 30 to 60 or 70. New Nichol School has a morning attendance of about 200. The greater part of the teachers are supplied from a Bible Class, numbering about 40, thirteen of whom have joined the Church during the past year. The Sunday Afternoon School has maintained its attendance with great equability during the year. The Superintendent issued tickets to the regular attendants which admitted them at certain intervals to an evening

entertainment; this device, which was an experiment, proved a success. The Sunday Evening School has maintained its reputation for numbers; there has been no decay in the enthusiasm of its noble band of teachers; the uproar in the outside has ceased, and the interior discipline has improved. Smith's Place was in a poor plight for some time, owing very much to the protracted illness of the Superintendent; it has just succeeded in obtaining a person of some experience and enthusiasm: the School is already improving; a good Bible Class has been established in an adjoining room, numbering 14, from which it is hoped eventually to draw teachers. Clare Market has increased its Sunday morning attendance from 25 to 50; Britannia Street from 38 to 63.

Hartshorn Court, Golden Lane, has a large Sunday Afternoon School, attached to which is a Youth's Bible Class, numbering between 40 and 50. As a mark of gratitude to their teacher they lately presented him with a copy of Scott and Henry's Bible and Commentary. Thirteen of the lads have united themselves to the Church of Christ.

The elder girls also have their Bible Class, numbering 30. These classes have two meetings for prayer on the Sabbath, and two during the week.

Bluegate Fields, situated in one of the most deplorable neighbourhoods, has an attendance of upwards of 200 at the Sunday Evening School during the winter months. The Elder Class, which meets in a separate room, has several of the age of twenty, many of whom, after leaving the class and the neighbourhood, travel many miles to get a glimpse of their teacher and a shake of his hand. Several of the elder girls who are in service are privileged to come to the Sunday Evening School. Three of the female teachers were formerly scholars. Mr. Woolfe, the excellent Superintendent, who resides two miles from the School, is constant in his attendance; besides which, he has gathered about him a small band of his immediate friends, whom he takes with him. He continues to conduct a Teachers' Bible Class every Thursday evening at half-past eight, attendance 30. Also the Teachers' Breakfast Meeting once a month. At this meeting is read a paper on some topic connected with the work, and conversation follows. To help the teachers, some of whom have small means and few aids to study, he has started a Book Society. On payment of one penny per week they have the reading of the "Leisure Hour," "Ragged School Union Magazine," "Sunday at Home," "Sunday Magazine," "Golden Hours," &c.

Kentish Town, of only three years' standing, has done an excellent work among a very rough class, many of whom are thieves; the behaviour has so much improved during the past year as to call forth expressions of surprise from the police. It is noteworthy that one family supplies six teachers to this School. During the illness of the Superintendent, three lads, from whom it was least expected, wrote letters expressive of their sympathy. One scholar has become a teacher; several of the most idle, vicious, and dishonest have become industrious and trustworthy.

Camden Town Sunday Evening School which used to be disorderly within and riotous without, is now a model of order. The Superintendent is a man of mark, and the teachers are deeply earnest.

Agar Town can point to its six teachers formerly scholars. So can Hope Street and Albert Street to its Sunday Evening Superintendent. Time

would fail in dragging to light all the glorious known results of Sabbath School work in Ragged Schools. In Britannia Street one teacher, formerly a scholar, has been over twenty years in connection with the School. The School is the home of her affections; its doors are never open but she is there. On a recent occasion when the children were being made happy, she exclaimed, with a gust of delight, "Oh, I am sure there never was such a School as ours."

The attendance of our Day School children at the Sunday School has been pretty good. Nevertheless, I think the matter requires more systematic treatment. If in the quarterly returns that are made on the application for the Grant, if a statement was added of the number of children absent from Sunday School on an average during the quarter, it might tend to secure greater vigilance among teachers and committees.

There has been no decline in the number of Voluntary Teachers, but the supply is still very far from being equal to the demand. Among the means to be adopted for maintaining and increasing the supply should be the holding of meetings at the commencement of September or October, to forecast the winter work. On such occasions each teacher should be induced to bring *one* if not more. Success has resulted from such a plan in many places, why not adopt it generally? Also the recurrence from September to April of monthly social meetings for prayer, conversation, and discussion would cultivate a spirit of friendship among the teachers, cheer the drooping, nerve the timid, and aid the teachers in the more efficient discharge of their duties.

Among the drawbacks is the following:—It sometimes happens on the night of the first appearance of a teacher, either from defective superintendence or some accidental cause, that the School has been a scene of disorder—this occasions annoyance and disgust, and the teacher is seen no more. New teachers should be well looked after till the School has a hold upon them. A form of appeal drawn up by me, was printed in "The Ragged School Union Magazine" for August, 1866. Such an appeal lithographed might be circulated in the churches or chapels contiguous to particular Schools. A specific number of teachers should be asked for, say, two, three, or four, as needed. Or the appeal might be folded up in the form of a letter, and addressed to persons of known piety and ability.

To facilitate its circulation, such an appeal might be printed at the expense of the Parent Society, leaving blank spaces for the name of the particular school, and other necessary insertions.

These would be supplied on application to the local Schools.

On the Sabbath that the appeal was distributed in any church or chapel, it could be arranged for the minister to preach a special sermon on the claims of Ragged Schools, and press the claim of the particular Schoo whose appeal lies on the seats.

DAY SCHOOLS.

Under my supervision there are 16 Boys', 12 Girls', and 86 Mixed Schools—upwards of 12,000 attendance.

Carr Street.—The enlargement of the building has provided accommo-

dation for 150 extra children. It is worthy of remark that the School, which, under previous mistresses, never exceeded 100, has attained to 250, and occasionally to 300. This is owing to the indomitable energy and ability of the teacher, combined with the services of a Paid Visitor, who devotes a certain number of hours per week to visiting the homes of the poor for the purpose of getting the poor children to attend School. I am of opinion that no operation is complete without such a Visitor or a Visiting Committee.

The Whitechapel Schools, under the superintendence of the Rev. F. Cohen, viz., Buck's Row, Colchester Street, and Chicksand Street, are well-conducted; as many as 1,000 children on some occasions are present.

EXAMINATIONS.

All the Schools under my supervision have been examined by me during the year. Reading, being the more important subject, has in some cases been tested two, three, and even four times. The examination in Scripture facts and doctrine, writing, arithmetic, tables and notation, has been rigidly and systematically done.

The results, as collected from tabulated statement, are as follows:—Present, 10,593; examined, 6,464; reading good, 1,377; moderate, 1,459; failed, 3,628; writing good, 1,204; moderate, 1,606; failed, 3,517; Scripture good, 921; moderate, 1,220; failed, 4,189. Notation, three figures, 1,885; four figures, 970; tables, multiplication, 1,369; money, 672; arithmetic, addition, 2,486; subtraction, 1,241; multiplication, 1,043; division, 404; money, 164, 135, 79, 53, 35, 16.

Reading—As heretofore I have taken a chapter in John. Those able to read an average verse fluently are marked good; those able to read a verse for the most part consisting of monosyllables are marked moderate.

Writing—Those marked good have written such sentences as "I want to be like Jesus, heaven is my happy home," or, "I like a clear bright frosty day;" those marked moderate have written the word charm, or swerve. Teachers, by the dictating method, have discovered (to their surprise) that many who wrote readily sentences from the black board were quite at a loss when required without a copy to write a word. Mere mechanical copying fails to give a knowledge of the letters. Those who have adopted the plan suggested by me in former reports, that is, of teaching the letters systematically, and afterwards of combining them in words of two or three letters, have confessed its advantage. Suspending two or three script alphabets in the School-room, dictating a word and requiring the children to hunt for the letters which compose it, and *afterwards* setting the copy on the black board, have been found to promote a knowledge of the letters and a facility in combining them.

Bible Facts—There has been an increase of 282 having a knowledge of the prominent facts of the Old Testament and a consecutive acquaintance with the more notable events of the Saviour's life. This is very gratifying, but, considering the amount of religious teaching, the number is not so large as we might expect. This is in many cases owing to the late or irregular attendance of the children, the want of home teaching, and deficient power of intelligent reading. To quote a previous report, "These matters have been

faithfully taught, or attempted to be taught, in our Schools, but understandings are feeble, memories are treacherous, and in many instances, like liquid poured from a full and wide-mouthed vessel into another of contracted neck, the greater part is spilt. From inattention to the difference in receptivity, there is great labour and small result. The truths or facts should pass from the teacher's mind as from an alembic, falling drop by drop. The great desiderata in religious teaching are condensation, apt illustration and repetition; line upon line, here a little and there a little. Friday should be devoted to recapitulation. Parker's illustrated series comprises fifty-two subjects. At the rate of five a month they can be gone through in a year (allowing for holidays). The pictures are very helpful, especially to the little ones; with them the subjects should be treated in the merest outline and gone through in a year. I would also recommend the little books, 'Peep of Day,' 'Line upon Line,' and 'Streaks of Light,' all by the same author."

Tables—The examination in the multiplication table as a rule was not carried beyond six times. The tables, during repetition, should be seen so that the eye may help the ear. The multiplication table is a very abstract thing, but when once well engraven on the memory it is fast for life.

Notation and Arithmetic—I have in former reports gone so much into detail in these subjects that I forbear its renewal, but will content myself with saying that the mode suggested has been adopted with effect by some.

EVENING SCHOOLS.

In 81 school buildings there are held 102 Evening Schools: 42 Boys', 31 Girls', and 29 Mixed Schools—about 5,000 attendance. Of these 30 are voluntary efforts, 6 of which may be called extra-voluntary, being held on one evening in addition to those on which a Paid Master is engaged. 14 Schools have teachers and paid assistants, 18 have teachers and voluntary help, and 40 are conducted by teachers, aided more or less by monitors. 58 of the evening teachers are day teachers also. I have selected some few cases as samples of the work:—Buross Street, formerly Duke Street.—The attendance has increased from 60 to 100, it may be owing to 50 of the children being fed twice a week. Charles Street, Drury Lane.—The mistress is aided by some of her former scholars. Hope Street is a good instance of how an able man can manage a school of 60 mixed scholars, with the aid of monitors. Chequers Alley has increased in numbers, and is conducted by voluntary teachers. As an encouragement to the young people, 70 of them were taken to the Polytechnic. Milton Yard is noticeable for the energy of its master, for the very big boys who attend it, for its early gathering together, attributable to the master opening the doors half an hour or more before school time, and to the opportunities afforded for quiet amusement. Ferdinand Place has been well assisted by voluntary teachers, principally ladies, who have shown themselves equal to the management of rough lads. Lamb and Flag maintains its numbers under the conduct of very earnest teachers, who are not adequately supported by voluntary teachers. Nichol Street still maintains its reputation for numbers and for voluntary help. With regard to the experiment made of giving prizes for attendance and progress I have no information. Moreton Road has an Adult Evening Class

attended by 18. The attendance at the Evening School has increased, and the supply of voluntary teachers has been maintained. These two efforts originated and maintained for so many years by Union Chapel, Islington, is a fine evidence of the life of Christ in His members.

Parker Street.—The Girls' School has increased; the Boys' School (2 evenings), a voluntary effort, is superintended by one of the lady-teachers of the Sunday Evening School. This effort was started in order that the teacher might gain a more intimate acquaintance with the lads, that she might increase their secular knowledge, assist them as occasion offered in obtaining employment, and watch over their spiritual interests. Two touching cases were recorded in my last report. This year there has been a marked improvement in the attendance. All who attend the Week Evening School attend the Sunday School. The voluntary staff has increased. The Superintendent reports one instance that occurred a few weeks ago, which will serve to show the kind feeling existing between the boys:—"One of their number being out of work and very hard up, it was proposed by another of them that we should get up a subscription to pay for a licence and a badge, that he might become a recognised shoe-black. This they cheerfully assented to, and very soon the sum was raised. It was not, however, used for the purpose originally fixed upon, the Commissioners of Police not deigning to take any notice of the poor boy's application for a licence; but on the boys hearing this, they immediately said, never mind, let him keep it and buy some clothes, for he wants them bad enough, poor fellow."

Elder Walk has an average attendance of 65 children, conducted by voluntary teachers. A class of adults in a separate room meet on the same evening. The scholars were examined in reading on the commencement of the session, and thirty shillings distributed in prizes at its close for attendance and progress.

Whetstone Park is a small effort, conducted by an earnest man, whose delight it is to seek out and benefit the most needy. Many of his scholars are very migratory, for although he seldom has more than 30 in attendance, yet 230 have passed through the School during the year. Thirty-four poor boys, principally crossing-sweepers, hawkers of cigar-lights, holders of horses, have been admitted during the year into the Central Red Shoe-black Society. Within the past six years, 116 boys have been placed in that Society; 38 being fatherless, 15 motherless, 17 without father or mother. This year two fatherless boys have been placed in the Royal Navy, five have been admitted into the Street Cleansing Brigade. Respectable situations have been obtained for four boys. Through the kind efforts of the boys' beadle of the Reformatory and Refuge Union, four orphan boys, destitute, ragged, and friendless, were rescued from their wretched street life, and placed in Refuges.

York Place.—This operation, under the superintendence of Mr. Quinten Hogg, has a night-school, composed to a very large degree of mere street boys, whose behaviour, from being of the most lawless description, have, under the omnipotence of love, become orderly and respectful. In addition there is a home for 15 boys, 6 of whom are in the City Reds' Shoe Brigade, 7 in York Place, and 2 otherwise employed. Of these, 10 are without either parents or friends, 2 have mothers in workhouse infirmaries, 1 has a

mother who shares a room with other people, and can find no room for the boy, and 1 lived with father and mother and 7 children in a small room in the Seven Dials. There is also a Shoe-black Society, numbering 60 boys, literally picked off the street. Of the boys who entered the night-school of York Place last year, 52 attend pretty regularly, 12 attend irregularly, 9 left neighbourhood, 2 dead, 4 attend some other School, 11 lost sight of altogether, 3 put in Reformatories, 4 put in places, 3 still in neighbourhood, but do not come. Sixteen boys from the immediate neighbourhood, who got their living by thieving, have been put in a way of getting an honest living; one-quarter have turned out badly, one-half very well, one-quarter not proved sufficiently to warrant an opinion. Mr. Hogg very judiciously says that he feels much difficulty in speaking of the matter of conversions. Two have died rejoicing in Jesus, and sent to him messages with their dying lips, that they would meet him in heaven. Among the elder girls, 4 very decided conversions have taken place, which have stood from eight to eighteen months' trial. Among the boys, 4 have been brought to the truth, 12 sufficiently impressed to give up open sin, and about 6 halting between two opinions.

Lamb and Flag collected a number of boys, whose life had been altogether in the streets, and whose main subsistence had been by thieving. These boys, professing a desire to lead an honest life if they could obtain employment, have been taken at their word. Money has been solicited and obtained from some well-known philanthropic individuals, outfits have been purchased, and the lads sent to sea.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

There are 61, with an attendance of 2,400 girls. The Lady Superintendent of the Poplar Sewing-class was accosted in the street by a young woman, who said, "I am E. D., who was in the sewing-class of the Poplar Ragged School. I have never forgotten what I learned there; those were happy times!"

OLD SCHOLARS' MEETINGS.

These were held at various Schools, among which "Lamb and Flag," "Hoxton," and "Clare Market" were conspicuous. These are truly interesting gatherings, and afford an opportunity of re-impressing some of the lessons taught in early life. At the Hoxton meeting, a Mr. B. stated that he was enticed into the School when a ragged little urchin with dirty shirt sleeves, minus a coat, and his toes out of his boots. He was a ringleader in school-riots until God blessed a teacher's words to his soul's conversion.

REFUGES.

There are six of these, all of which are admirably superintended. The number of inmates is 320.

PENNY BANKS.

There are fifty-four of these useful institutions in the Schools of North and East London, with upwards of 9,000 depositors, and about £4,000 the amount deposited. Although the balance after withdrawals at Christmas

is not above one-fifth of the gross amount, yet the saving only for a short time must exercise self-denial, and tend to the formation of provident habits.

Mr. Orsman, of Hartshorn Court, says, "The Children's Savings' Bank continues to prosper; he places the first penny in the bank for any child willing to save."

With the Penny Bank of Britannia Row is associated a Lending Library. The depositors are permitted to take a book home with them every Saturday evening whilst they have an open account, so that reading and a provident habit are encouraged at the same time.

To encourage provident habits among the children, some teachers have established Farthing Banks, and these have instances that, like the widow's mite, deserve recording for all time. "If you please, I want to draw out my threepence halfpenny," said a little girl at George Yard. "And what are you going to do with it?" was asked. She replied, "Mother is ill; there is nothing at home to eat, and I want to buy a two pound loaf. I put by my farthings to buy a pinafore, but I must go without and buy some bread."

BANDS OF HOPE.

There are twenty of these in my districts, with about 1,500 members.

MOTHERS' MEETINGS.

There are forty-four of these useful gatherings connected with my Schools. These are not only useful in the making and mending of garments, but for the useful lessons taught, as some one reads while the rest ply the needle.

EDUCATIONAL AUXILIARIES.

Among these may be mentioned school entertainments, penny readings, free lectures, lending libraries, excursions into the country, flower shows, and industrial exhibitions.

THE INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITIONS

were a great success at Poplar and New Nichol Street. The flower shows at 'Ferdinand Place,' Lamb and Flag, and Elder Walk. Fox Court is conspicuous for its entertainments and lectures, one or the other every week, to parents and children alternatively. In several Schools the lending library forms a most conspicuous feature, and is worked most industriously. Brunswick Street distinguishes itself by its large sale of periodicals—700 in number; they are such serials as *Our Children's Magazine, Band of Hope, British Workman, Children's Friend*, &c., &c. Such reading must create a distaste for the nonsensical, and oftentimes immoral trash cast in the way of the young. Gun Street, by gift (not by sale) as rewards, distributed thirty-six Bibles, sixteen Testaments, forty-eight Prayer Books, two Church Hymn Books, 250 penny Hymn Books, 300 *Our Children's Magazine*, 312 *Child's Companion*, 280 *Children's Friend*, 108 *Missionary Magazine*, 300 *British Workman*, 300 *Band of Hope*, 1,440 small books.

SANATORY.

Most of the Schools may be said to be in a good sanatory condition. I

have had occasion in several instances to urge upon the teacher and Committee the immediate necessity of attending to the drains and closets.

Several Schools in the east of London have accepted the assistance of the Ladies' Sanitary Association in a matter of a visit to the parks for fresh air.

CHILDREN'S DINNERS.

The practice of giving one or more weekly dinners has become very common. The Schools in some cases obtain their own funds, such as Brewer's Court Clare Market, St. Giles's, Little Denmark Street, Broad Street, and Little Coram Street. The dinner given in Parker Street to the St. Giles's Schools, was on each occasion to as many as two hundred, who received a good substantial meal of meat and potatoes. Anchor Street, from funds for the greater part supplied by a few gentlemen, has given a dinner of baked meat, pudding, and potatoes, three times, and when the weather has been severe five times a week.

New Nichol Street has supplied soup to children and parents. So has Ferdinand Place and Charles Street. This year Hoxton and Camden Town have a soup kitchen; both were brought into existence by prominent friends of this Society. Several Schools have been assisted by funds from the East London Mission, viz.—Lamb and Flag, Hartshorn Court, Hatfield Street, George Yard, and Goulston Street. East India Road has had its most needy ones supplied by the munificence of one individual (Mr. Self). The master of one School commenced giving food to his children in the winter of 1854.

HELP IN SCHOOLS.

I remarked, in my last report, that time tables were useful, not only to the teachers, but also to the Committee and Visitors, as they could see when particular subjects were taught, especially reading, and might so arrange as to lend a friendly hand by calling in and taking a class; by this plan they not only help the children, but learn to sympathise with the teachers' difficulties.

The Holloway Schools are conspicuous for the aid afforded by ladies to both Day and Evening Schools; this tells in a remarkable way on the attendance at the Sunday School, which this year has been very conspicuous for the number of big rough lads.

During the seven years of my visitation there has been an increase of 29 Sunday Schools. Increase of children 3,000; Day Schools, increase 26, and increase of scholars about 3,000; Evening Schools, increase 11; increase of scholars, 400. The increase is probably more as the returns have been more carefully given. Increase of Voluntary Teachers, 294; average attendance of Voluntary Teachers, 272; Penny Banks, increase 15; Bible Class, increase 36; increased attendance, 744; Clothing Clubs, increase 6; Ragged Church and Missionary Services, increase, 23; increased attendance, 2,542; Bands of Hope established, 13; members, 954; School Libraries established, 49; number of books, 8,904.

SUGGESTIONS.

It has occurred to me that, in consequence of the readiness of the public

to supply money for food, the attraction of an occasional meal might be employed to secure a large attendance of the street Arabs—such a class of lads I saw a short time since gathered together at George Yard, where a tea was provided. These gatherings might take place in the beginning of October. A good staff of teachers should be in attendance to cope with the ignorance, depravity, and lawlessness that would flock in at the scent of a meal. The attendance of scholars might be limited, and the admission be by tickets. If this were done by all the Ragged Schools of a district, say Whitechapel, on the same evening, it would prevent what would otherwise most likely happen, the turning up of the same boy at five or six different places. By having all the meals at the same time, it would not only prevent the evil alluded to, but also help to secure that the number in no case should be unmanageable, and further the gathering in of the large mass of outlying wretchedness which still awaits the kindly treatment of the friends of this Society. The other sex coming for the most part under what has been defined as the social evil would need specific treatment.

On looking over the work of the past year it is gratifying to find so many results cropping up as the reward of patient persevering Christian effort, which are only samples of the quality of the grain and earnests of the mighty harvest now invisibly waving and yet to be reaped. Let us, therefore, thank God and take courage.

Correspondence.

THE DRESS OF OUR FEMALE SCHOLARS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—I was present at the distribution of Scholars' prizes at Exeter Hall last April, and have wished often since to write to you on the impressions which the scene left upon my mind; but I have been unable to address you till now. It is not however too late, I hope, to offer a few remarks and suggestions upon a subject which, as I regard it, is of great importance to the future of the girls who receive their early lessons in the Ragged Schools.

I was much pleased with a great deal that I saw upon that occasion; indeed I may say that with one exception I was thoroughly gratified; the exception was the dress of the girls. I was seated with some friends upon the platform, and had therefore ample opportunity for forming an opinion during the "march past," or procession of the scholars who were to receive their prizes. I could not help remarking to a gentleman who was taking great interest in the proceedings, that the boys had a much more *respectable* appearance than the girls, and I ventured to attribute the unfavourable contrast to the tawdry dress of the girls. The gentleman agreed with me in this view of the matter, but excused the wearers of the shabby finery, by saying the clothes were "left off and sent by ladies for the use of the scholars." Now this is just what I want to say a word or two upon, to the friends of the Ragged Schools. It would be so much better to send plain and serviceable clothing for the use of these poor children, rather than

cast-off finery; better strip dresses and jackets of bugle and bead trimmings, and burn dirty feathers and flowers, than send such things to Ragged Schools, because many a poor girl may thus obtain her first ideas of dress and love of cheap finery, which leads so many of them to ruin. As the majority of these scholars will most probably some day enter DOMESTIC SERVICE, it is the more important to instil into their minds early the proper notions of dressing according to their station in life.

Having said thus much, the fault-finding is at an end; I have nothing but praise for all the rest. The order and good behaviour of the children were remarkable, and the interested attention to what was placed before them for their amusement very gratifying. It was altogether a sight not soon to be forgotten from a philanthropic point of view; and the friends of Ragged Schools must have had *their* reward, as well as the scholars, that evening.

Trusting that I have not occupied too much of your space with my remarks,

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

July, 1868. M. A. B.

[Whilst inserting the above letter from an influential friend of Ragged Schools, we hope that it will not deter our friends from sending parcels of left-off clothing, which prove very serviceable to our scholars. At the same time the evil complained of by our correspondent can be easily remedied in the way suggested.—ED.]

Notices of Meetings.

DOUGHTY STREET.

ON June 9th last the annual meeting of these schools was held at the Horns Assembly Rooms. The chair was occupied by Sheriff McArthur.

The annual report of the secretary (Mr. W. H. Miller) showed that, as regarded the general receipts of the school, there would have been a sad falling off had it not been for legacies bequeathed by departed well-wishers to the cause. The Sunday School continued to rank among the largest in the metropolis. The reading, writing, and arithmetic classes, held three evenings in the week, continues to make steady progress. At suitable ages places were found for the girls by the ladies of the Clothing Association, by whom also they were supplied with garments; 254 girls and 113 boys had been equipped from this fund. A boot and shoe fund had been recently established. At the Sunday evening school the average attendance was 550. The Bible-class had increased in importance. The teachers required help, and the committee trusted next year to have such an accession of funds as would place the secretary and treasurer at ease in regard to financial matters. Notwithstanding the depression of trade, 6,000 deposits had been made in the penny bank, amounting to £114 10s. 4d. The morning schools steadily improved, five teachers and 60 scholars usually attending. In the evening it sometimes reached 200.

The meeting was addressed by Revs. J. Marchant and G. M. Murphy, Mr. J. G. Gent, and Messrs. J. Corderoy, Miller, and Moore. Mr. W. H. Miller, in the course of his remarks, reported a very interesting case as illustrative of the effects of Ragged School teaching. A blind girl, a regular attendant at the school, but who was detained at home one very wet Sunday evening, said she would go into her room and pray for

the teachers, as she could not be with them. After spending an hour in prayer alone with God, on leaving, owing to her blindness, she fell down the stairs and broke her leg, and is now an inmate of St. Thomas's Hospital, but in the enjoyment of perfect peace; her only regret being that she is prevented attending school.

FIELD LANE.

THE twenty-fifth anniversary of this institution was recently celebrated, the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair.

From the report, read by Mr. Tawell, the secretary, it appeared that there are schools for babies whose mothers have to go out charing, or to otherwise earn their livelihood; a day school for infants, another for boys, and a third for girls. There are night schools for them similarly classified, and a girls' industrial school. During the past year these several schools were attended by 1,660 destitute children. There were 10,000 garments made in the industrial schools. With the broken food sent to the kitchen from a few large City houses the committee were enabled to supply 100 dinners daily to their destitute *proteges*, and aided by the East-end Mission they contrived to feed 100 of the most destitute of them during the past winter. There is a mothers' class, the attendance at which varies from 50 to 100. With the help of the East-end Mission 300 families were in the winter months supplied with warm day and night clothing and with coals. On Christmas-day 400 homeless men and women had a good meat dinner and plum-pudding supplied to them. At the Ragged Church the aggregate attendance during the past year was 42,760. The average on Sundays was 900, the largest being 1,256. The persons who attended those religious services were homeless men and women. In the male refuge 3,104 persons sought shelter during the year: they included the distressed of all classes, from professional men to navvies. Among these there were 96,586 loaves distributed for food, and 571 of them obtained situations. The female refuge gave lodgings to 1,690 homeless women, who were supplied with 34,000 loaves. A training home for servants, a place of safety for young girls out of employment, trained 105 of them for domestic service; and a youths' institution, established with a similar object, was attended by 50.

The noble Chairman referred to the unhealthy, demoralising, and degrading tone of much of the cheap literature of the day, the effect of which upon the more youthful portion of the population was too frequently to render crime captivating and familiar. He dwelt upon the necessity of all the true friends of the poor endeavouring to counteract the evil tendencies of these pernicious and immoral works, by the dissemination of a more healthy but equally cheap literature, an attempt which would naturally be attended with considerable difficulty, inasmuch as the former class of books were likely to find a readier response than the latter in consequence of their appealing to the lower instead of the higher instincts of human nature. The result of the efforts made in connection with this ragged church, which he had visited with great delight, had gone to show that the people of England were not insensible to the claims of religion, but that the religion required was not connected with lights, incense, green coats, and gymnastics, but must be of the best and purest quality. The institution, standing alone as it at first did, was now one of over two hundred, all engaged in the same work, and he who had been connected with it from its commencement could liken himself to Alexander, for as President of the Ragged School Union and Chairman of the Field Lane Ragged School, he had attained the height of human ambition, his only sigh being that they had still the same labour before them, combined, however, with the solace that they might reasonably hope that their efforts in the future might be attended by the same good results as it had been in the past.

Papers, Original and Selected.

WORSE THAN ORPHANAGE.

As trustees of the public, the Ragged School Union has from the first exercised the utmost vigilance in keeping the affiliated Schools to the right class. Thus they instruct their School agents to personally investigate all doubtful cases; and hence their journals show that houses have been visited, parents often seen, and, in some cases, the social status of every child in the School has been tested. In every case, those who were above the class were at once excluded; so that—so far as we are able to judge—our Ragged Schools are restricted to the right class.

Probably much discussion on controverted points in social science or theology would have been averted, had there been a prior definition of the terms used. Men have affixed different meanings to the same word, and so they have based a protracted controversy on a double definition. So has it been with Ragged Schools; for some of our opponents have given one meaning to the phrase "right class," whilst we have affixed another. It may then be useful to define this term in the Ragged School sense. Thus, the right class may be divided into two main sections, namely, those whose parents are too poor, and those whose fathers are too depraved to pay a School fee. In the estimation of the latter class, twopence paid at a British School means twopence less to spend in gin or tobacco. The children of this last class, indeed, are the most difficult of all to discipline whilst in School; for the home-training being the very antipodes of the School teaching, they too often *un*learn at home what they learn in School. In addition, they have usually more physical energy than the really destitute; whilst the bad passions of fallen humanity seem to be intensified by the fearful entail of hereditary sin. They have much energy; but it is not given to God, but to Satan; or, to use the words of an old author, "God gave them the talent, but the devil the application thereof." It is of this class that novices, when they visit Ragged Schools, ofttimes express doubts whether they ought not to be at once excluded from the Ragged Schools.

They ascertain that the fathers earn as much as the bulk of curates, and so infer that their offspring ought to attend, to say the least, a British or National School. Yet, after all, this is but a partial view of a question which has two opposite phases. For, like the great Syrian general Naaman, a fearful "but" (2 Kings v. 1) comes in, indicating that a moral leprosy dominates. Thus, too often, the glaring gin palace—solely got up at their expense—absorbs their earnings; and hence the children are really as poor—nay, often as starving—as the poorest child in our Schools. In every social respect, then, they are in a worse state than that of orphanage, since for orphans excellent asylums are provided; whilst for the child of the habitual drunkard or idler there is no refuge, if they are excluded from Ragged Schools.

The question then is forced upon our notice, Are we to leave the children of these wretched men and women to perish in the parents' sin? or are we not rather bound, by our loyalty to Christ, to try and save the children, if we cannot save their guilty fathers and mothers? Believing, as we do, that these poor victims of parental neglect have souls for which Jesus died, we do a parent's part for these worse than orphans; and happily, through the power of the Holy Spirit, thousands have already been harvested in the great garner of heaven.

Take a few cases which have come under our notice, of those whom we have designated as worse than orphans. Thus, ofttimes when we have asked, "What is the father?" the reply has been, "He has run away from mother," usually with some one *not* his wife. They might die in a felon's jail, or be buried in a pauper's grave; but what cared he for that, so that he might wallow in sensuality? Sometimes, too, when a child in the Devil's Acre has been asked, "Who is your father?" her reply has been, "I never had one, as I knows of." Yet that fair-haired, clear-skinned, and bright-faced girl, dragged up in the slums of Westminster, might, had she known her parentage, have claimed for her father a man highly placed in society, a very gem in Belgravian circles! Alas! for the time when this poor child shall meet and know who was her father for the first time at that awful bar, when the appeal of neglected children will sound with the voice of a trumpet! But now we ask, with the terrible earthly prospects of this poor child, whose only dower is her beauty, Is not her condition worse than that of orphanage? And ought we not to come to the rescue?

Then, again, how often we notice in Ragged Schools the children

of habitual drunkards; so much, indeed, does this vice affect our poorer brethren, that we doubt not that, concurrent with the disuse of intoxicants, a third of our Schools might be closed! Take one case to illustrate this. On visiting a Bermondsey Ragged School, we were struck by the miserable aspect of five children. To say that they were ragged is to say too little—for the problem was to discover how they managed to keep their clothes on their backs. Their hair was unkempt, and the hue of their skin told that water was rarely applied to their persons; whilst their pinched features and sunken eyes told the sad tale of starvation. Yet, on inquiry, we learnt that their father, a skilled workman, earned £2 10s. per week—or rather, in four days and a half—at a tannery. What, then, was the secret of their rags, and of this visible hunger? Simply this: he and his wife commenced drinking on Saturday night, got repeatedly drunk on Sunday and Monday; and he did not go to work before Tuesday afternoon. Surely such children—notwithstanding the large income of their father—had better by far have been orphans. Yet this case is but a sample of hundreds which meet us almost daily. Thus when we have asked, "Why did you not attend the Sunday School?" the ready reply has been, "Father was drunk," or "Mother was too tipsy to get me ready."

Direct neglect of children can too often be traced to this cause. Lately a very shocking instance of the pernicious effect of drunkenness in deadening or altogether destroying the natural affections was afforded at Worship Street Police-court. William and Caroline Brooks were charged with having systematically and cruelly neglected their five children, the eldest being only seven years of age. It appears that the parents spent all their money and all their time in public-houses, and that they were rarely seen in their miserable lodgings after an early hour in the morning or before midnight. Last week the attention of the neighbours was called to the condition of the children, who were found starving, emaciated, and suffering from an infectious disease. The wretched little victims of parental cruelty were at once sent to the workhouse infirmary, and Brooks and his wife were given into custody by the relieving officer of Shoreditch Union. They were remanded, but in the meantime the youngest child had died of measles. Now surely in a case like this we cannot but consider these poor victims of parental neglect as worse than orphans, and we are bound by every Gospel motive to rescue them from the direful home-education such parents are sure to give.

But, unhappily, these children are not the only ones who are worse than orphans. For, as if example were not enough, too many of these wretched parents directly educate their children for the bottomless pit. Have we not times without number seen mothers putting the gin-bottle to their infant's lips; and thus so early habituating them to the use of intoxicants, that they almost become a necessary of life in more mature years! On one occasion a costermonger gave his son, aged nine years, half-a-pint of gin on Christmas-day. When we spoke to the poor boy, he replied, "Father says it's hard lines if a man can't get drunk once a year!" But, even blacker than this, we have heard girls who were living in sin palliate it by saying, "I do it to keep my mother!" These wretched mothers knew it too well; but gin had blighted all feeling, and rendered the heart callous to all principles of virtue.

These cases might be multiplied did space permit, but we think sufficient has been shown to show that there is a class in Ragged Schools who, though not in absolute penury, are yet in a worse state than that of orphans. Now it was for this as well as for the really indigent class that Ragged Schools were originally designed. Not that we wish for one moment to usurp the proper place of the parent; but in the case of bad parents, we only do what they ought to do—train for God; and in the case of really destitute, but good parents, we aid them by keeping their children from the temptations incident to street life. Thus in both cases Ragged Schools aim to save society from the evils of bad and poor homes, and so act as a kind of *moral filter* to separate the "precious from the vile."

And even if we do no more than get them for a few hours away from their surroundings, our mission will not be in vain: for, in the words of an experienced city missionary, "to get such children into the society of even decent people is in itself a protest against their mode of life." But what must be the influence, if we place them for a few hours in contact with men and women, not only decent in habit and language, but who are working for eternity, and whose very walls could tell of prayers, and tears shed for wandering souls?

But even more than this, we endeavour so to train these poor children for the world to come, that, when their life-work is over, they will not have to mourn over a wasted life. Training them for heaven, we expect to meet them there! Happily, in both cases, through the benediction of the Most High, the reaper has tracked

the path of the sower: and thus the sower and reaper will "rejoice together" in that land where there is no sorrow, because there is no sin.

OUR WORKFIELD.

BY THE REV. W. MORLEY PUNSHON.

We are apt to talk loosely about London as a "great city," and we have thought, perhaps, until we have been bewildered about its size, about its endlessness, about startling contrasts of wealth and want, of ostentation and outlawry, of charity and crime. But how few of us have got any definite idea of the mass of our fellows who are daily living, toiling, suffering, *dying*, in the 120 square miles of which this London is composed!

"A city," said a French writer, "no; London is a *province*, covered with houses!" And even this emphatic language is too feeble to express the greatness of London; for there are twice as many people in London as in the largest division of France, and a quarter of a million more than the most crowded county in England. Five times more populous than New York, four times more populous than St. Petersburgh, twice as populous as Constantinople, with two-thirds more people in it than Paris, and one-fourth more than even the living multitudes of Pekin, the mind fails to understand it, the brain recoils from the contemplation of the mighty sum. How shall we get to understand it? Shall we weigh it with kingdoms? The kings of Saxony and Würtemburg do not, either of them, reign over as many subjects as our Queen rules in her chief metropolis of London.

Will you try it by its growth? I do not ask you to go back to the days when Druids drank out of the Wallbrook, and when the Fleet, the common sewer of your drainage now, was a rushing river, in which the Saxons were baptized, and on whose bosom floated navies of merchantmen. Come to later times, when Wycliffe, the "Star of the Reformation," flashed "a light in a dark place." There was not so many people in England *then* by half a million, as will *sleep to-night* in London. Gauge it by the accommodation it provides, or which it fails to provide. Every night there are homeless ones wandering through its streets, or crowding to its refuges of charity, more than the population of many a thriving village; while, if the houses which hold this population were put side by side, we should have one continuous street, with the tenants at one end listening to the chimes at York Minster, and the tenants at the other slumbering under the shadow of the Pyrenees! Think of it by its periodical increase. If it were possible or supposable that all who came into it one year could be drafted thither from the same place, then Guernsey would be like Tyre in her ruin, "desolate and without inhabitants." Then, in less than two years the lovely Isle of Wight would be an Eden, with scarce an Adam to till it; and fourteen of our Scottish shires would have their broad acres cleared as thoroughly as ever feudal laird could wish.

Conceive of it by its daily waste and its daily supply. Every eight

minutes of every day in every year, a soul goes out of London to its account before the great Judge; and this marvel and mystery of death is neutralised by the marvel and mystery of life; for every five minutes of every day in every year, in some London household or other, a child is born. Further, if it were possible to stretch out the population of London in a line, and for it to pass before you, at a given point, two and two, the then double line would be 670 miles in length; and should the whole walk by at the speed of three miles in one hour, it would be nine days and nights before the long procession had swept by.

And it is for this London that I plead—vast, bewildering, terrible! with a hum and a tramp of sound, with a cry wailing before the all-merciful One, which surely moves His heart to say, as erst of Nineveh, "Should I not spare the great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand people that cannot discern between their right hand and their left?"

IN AN OPIUM DEN.

As if gin-drinking were not hurrying myriads into perdition fast enough, another form of intoxication and even more deadly poisoning is becoming popular among the lower strata of society—we refer to opium drinking. Nor can we wonder at this, seeing that mere babies are drugged with laudanum in the form of "Daffy's Elixir," and "Godfrey's Cordial." This is done to keep them quiet, whilst the poor mothers are at work, or, what is equally common, whilst these misguided women are committing *slow suicide* in the gin palaces of London.

Some years ago this plague broke out, both in the manufacturing districts and in the fens of Lincolnshire. It was found to be a cheap way to quiet infants who craved both for food and maternal care. But the lack-lustre eye, the pale, yellow cheek, and the tottering limbs showed that a premature grave was being dug by their parents. In these districts the deadly drug is sold by the gallon; and is regarded as much an article of merchandise, especially on Saturday nights, as food and raiment. A report to the Lords of the Privy Council, prepared by Dr. Alfred Taylor, in 1864, indicates that the average annual consumption of opium in Lincolnshire is above 100 grains per head; and that in one shop alone from three to four hundred persons were supplied with that drug in the form of pills or penny sticks every Saturday. This use of opium is stated by Mr. J. E. White, in his report to the "Children's Employment Committee," to be the great cause of infant mortality in the fens. We need not then be surprised to learn, on the authority of the medical officer of the Privy Council, that in some entirely rural marsh districts, the habitual mortality of young children is almost as great as in the more infanticial of our manufacturing towns.

But when this drug does not do its deadly work in childhood, it almost necessarily follows that a taste for opium is so imbibed, that it becomes a habit in manhood. So it is in an analogous case, for when mothers give gin to their children, can we be surprised that the adult cannot do without it? But, whether it be gin or opium, the moral scourge which follows may

be traced to the mothers, and they ought to suffer the penalty of their crime.

The same evil has recently crept into London from the country; the vice being, doubtless, imported by the immigrants from the midland counties. It is in the east of London where the growth of this habit is most marked; thereby adding another woe to the catalogue of its chronic miseries. But, not only do the chemists vend the drug in large quantities, but there are dens where the opium pipe is as regularly smoked as it is in China. They are kept by Chinamen, and the opium smokers comprise, not only Asiatics, but British sailors, and men and women who desire to find in opium that oblivion from care which alcoholic liquors cannot give. The following sketch of an opium den in Whitechapel was supplied to the Paris "Figaro," by M. Albert Woolf. He says that he visited it, accompanied by the police:—

"We stopped before one of these hovels; the police officer pushed open the door, which was ajar.

"Who's there?" demanded some one inside.

"Don't be frightened, Jack, it's only me!" replied our Hercules. Whereupon we enter a small room; a strange nauseous odour pervades the apartment, and we quickly beat a retreat.

"Wait a while," says the policeman; "it's only opium."

By the flickering light of the fire burning in the grate I perceive the individual addressed as Jack. It is a Chinese who keeps this wretched hole, where one can get intoxicated for a few coppers. The room we enter is so low that we are unable to stand upright. Lying pell-mell on a mattress placed on the ground are Chinamen, Lascars, and a few English blackguards who have imbibed a taste for opium. Some stretched at full length abandon themselves to the fumes of intoxication in its different stages, while others are only just commencing to light their pipes at a kind of night lamp, which is placed by the side of each smoker.

Jack, the master of the house, jabbers a little English. He inquires of us if we wish to smoke, and points to some pipes, which have been already in a thousand courteous mouths, and which he will be happy to offer us, lying on a table between a pile of potatoes and a few bits of charcoal. The police officer explains to this devil's tapster that we have come simply to look on.

"Is there no one upstairs?" inquires he.

"Yes, there is one woman."

"Whereabouts is upstairs?" I asked, looking around. "Why, there is no staircase."

Jack fetches a little ladder from the yard and places it against the wall, where some cats' and rats' skins are hanging; he mounts a few steps, and, pointing to a hole in the ceiling, says, "Here."

"There is not room for all of us up there," remarks the officer. "You follow the Chinaman, and I'll wait for you below."

One by one we climb the ladder and mount through the opening. Seated on a mattress in a room lighted by a dim lamp is an old woman with dishevelled white hair, thin face, and dull-looking eyes, blowing a cloud of smoke and coughing every now and then like a person in the last stage of consumption. She casts a stupefied gaze upon us, then throws herself back, and continues to puff away at her pipe of opium.

The room where she is is a small loft, encumbered with a multitude of objects, belonging to the landlord, but beyond the mattress on which the old sorceress is reclining there is not a single piece of furniture. The atmosphere is so tainted with opium that, being on the point of suffocation, I break the only window pane, through which, by the way, a kitten would find some difficulty in passing. The fresh air inundates the room, rousing up the sorceress, who gives vent to a volley of complaints in an unintelligible jargon. A shilling flung on the unclean couch mollifies the old woman, who opens her eyes to their full extent by a superhuman effort. She seizes the coin with her long, bony fingers and contemplates it with delight. A new attack of coughing, more formidable than the former, seems to tear her lungs as we retreat through the little hole and down the ladder steps."

Like all the vices which afflict our poorer brethren the habitual use of opium threatens to become a growing one. It is in the interest of the scholars of Ragged Schools that we point to this growing evil; for, surely, unless the parents are warned of the deadliness of this habit, it will descend to their offspring—to the ruin of body and soul. The vice nearly ruined such men as Coleridge and De Quincey; for the drug has a peculiar effect in deadening energy and in rendering moral control impossible. It is sad to learn, that, whilst in the form of Bands of Hope we are doing so much to induce abstinence from intoxicants, our Ragged Scholars should now be exposed to a vice still more deadly. But we trust our friends in the East will be equal to meet this crisis, and so prevent children from being corrupted by their parents. They have done this as respects alcoholic liquors; and we hope that their fight with the eastern opium dens will soon cause those plantations of lunacy to be closed by the magistracy.

A CHILD LABOUR MARKET.

The idea of a metropolitan bazaar for the hire of children may seem incredible to many, yet the market has actually been in existence for many years—for more than half a century. It is held near an arch of the Great Eastern Railway, situate in White Street, an humble-looking thoroughfare leading from the Bethnal Green Road into Whitechapel Road, and inhabited principally by silk-weavers and other operatives. The market hours are from seven to eight or nine on Monday or Tuesday mornings. At these times, numbers of children belonging to both sexes, their ages ranging from nine to sixteen, are to be found standing, or walking about, on the pavement, waiting to be hired. The number varies considerably, according to the period of the year and the prevailing demand for labour, but the average number of children to be met with at any one time is seldom less than forty or fifty. In former years the number was much larger. The children are hired by the week, the wages ranging from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d., with "2d. for myself," and tea. No character is required on either side; in fact, so far as the children are concerned, there is often none to give. The girls are engaged principally for the purpose of taking care of infants while the mothers are at work; the lads are usually employed by the weavers and others, the hours of labour

being from seven or eight a.m. to eight or nine p.m., sometimes less and sometimes more.

The general character of these child-labourers is described as being very bad. A woman engaged in twisting chenille for hair-nets says that she knew the market very well. "It is about the worst thing ever introduced; it is in every way productive of evil to the children who go there to be hired. The insults and language used there are shocking; no decent child can attend without being contaminated." Dr. Jarvis, the medical officer of health for the Bethnal Green district, says:—"The scene and language while this market is going on are quite disgraceful. I have several times applied to the police magistrates, and have written to Sir Richard Mayne to endeavour to put a stop to it. And the police have checked it a little; but after a short time it is as bad as ever again. At the first appearance of the police, children and hirers rush shouting and swearing to another street, constantly retreating or doubling back, according to circumstances.'

The workshops in which the children thus hired are employed are wholly beyond the reach of the law in its present inefficient condition. Go where you will—east, north, or south—you will find the provisions of the late Act uniformly disregarded in those places where its restraining powers are most needed. Among the majority of the Irish and Jew slop-workers of Whitechapel and Bethnal Green, silk-weavers and fancy trimming-makers, Shoreditch cabinetmakers, boot and shoemakers of the Hackney Road and Bethnal Green, Clerkenwell artificial flower-makers, and a multitude of others, little or no change has been effected in the long hours or unwholesome conditions of labour. In many cases they profess to be wholly ignorant of the provisions of the Act; in others they express their disbelief in its ability to reach them. To properly enforce it in certain districts, almost every house would require to be placed under constant espionage. As to procuring information from the workers themselves, it is simply impossible. Whether they be children or adults, it is difficult to make them fully comprehend that the Act is intended for their benefit. All that they can understand is that it tends to limit the amount of wages procurable by them, and this in their eyes is amply sufficient to render the Act completely obnoxious. Besides, a workman who turned round and gave evidence against his employer would find the door of every workshop henceforth ruthlessly closed against him.

FLOWER SHOWS IN THE DEVIL'S ACRE.

Mr. G. Manville Fenn, in the *Morning Star*, thus graphically describes a Flower Show which was held on July 7th, in Westminster. We are glad to learn that many children belonging to the Ragged Schools of the Devil's Acre competed for and won the prizes then awarded. He says:—

"I was attracted by the very mention of a Flower Show in a spot little dreamed of; for though we had a few sycamores and a little turf, sickly and brown with the sun, the show was in no garden; but in a yard, surrounded almost by the buildings of ages long past, beneath the shadow of the old abbey—in short, in the Dean's Yard, Westminster; where, under the pre-

sidency of Dean Stanley, the working men and women, the domestic servants, and the children of the various schools of Westminster, have held their third annual exhibition, and competed for some fifty prizes given, by the Society for Promoting Window Gardening, to the most successful cultivators.

On reaching the yard I found a lengthy tent, in whose well-arranged interior were displayed the carefully watched and tended flowers from hundreds upon hundreds of homes—the geranium blushing from a modest pink, through varying shades, to the deepest scarlet—the pendulous fuschia, the odorous musk, annuals innumerable, whispering of the humble penny packet of seed, and months of care, but all carefully numbered and classified, a favoured few having the honorary ticket assigning first, second, or third prize. Let me repeat here, that they were one and all humble flowers, even to the winners of the first prizes; but in every simple plant at this exhibition there was a story, whispering that one grand word, comprising so much of the duty of man—*progress*.

It is true that in every flower exhibited there was the breathing of its history, and it required no very imaginative mind to be carried into the homes from whence they came: the lodgings in the crowded slums—the wretched streets that cluster like rings around the stately palaces and noble streets of Westminster. But not only from these haunts of poverty came the flowers, for above one stand we could read the words "Westminster Hospital," and gaze upon the carefully-tended flowers of some poor sufferer stricken down by accident or disease—flowers that had but a short time before brightened the bare, whitewashed ward, and cheered the sight, while they breathed a soft fragrance for those who lay around. Bright flowers, many of them; but in some cases there was a strange withered look, a want of freshness; the new shoots were few, the flowers dwarfed, and, inmates of hospitals, they had it in their sickly looks and falling leaves. Again, a little further, and one stood before the brightly reddened pots from the workhouse; primly kept, neat, and well-tended pots, whose simple flowers bore a healthier look by far. And there were prizes here, and, in my judgment, justly awarded, by those whose duty must have been of no light nature.

Again a few steps, and there were the productions that formed nearly one-half of the flower show, namely, those of Class IV., the flowers of the children in parochial, national, infant, Sunday, and Ragged Schools. Row after row, they occupied a goodly space, and, in my humble estimation, formed the glory of the whole affair. The sight was interesting at first; and as I looked from flower to flower, reading plainly enough how hard must have been the battle to bring them to such perfection, seeing this one stained by London's immortal blacks, that one yearning for more light and the power to inhale the pure, fresh, country air, I learned that there must have been much indomitable perseverance here, much of that sturdy English will that has made so great our nation. But it was when, after the exhibition had been kept strictly select for some hours, the young floriculturists were admitted, that the interest culminated. For here were pride-flushed little cheeks—cheeks of urchins of eight or nine years old—as their owners hurried, companion after companion, to see that prize-ticketed plant; their little inches seeming to augment as they received the congratulations of their friends.

But there were two more classes upon which I have not touched—those of the domestic servants—not largely represented, but well; and the working men and women. It is only fair to say that in this latter class were, as might be expected, the largest and finest plants. And here, too, you learned the patience, care, and love that had been bestowed upon these ornaments of home, in the well-sanded pot, the neatly-twisted wire ladder, the carefully-cut stick, and well-kept window boxes, some of which were rather ill-advisedly covered with paper, perhaps to hide the fact of which their owners should have been proud, namely, that these boxes had grown old and decayed in so good a service. That the plants were but humble is nothing; for the object must be studied, and not the particular flower cultivated. In some pots were the simplest of simple plants—the London pride, southernwood, nasturtium, &c. But what of that? There was the fact still of a love of the brightest and purest of God's good gifts to man—the fair sweet blossoms that brightened the sills of perhaps a garret or attic in a crowded court, and that watchful care to bring them to maturity.

"However can they get them to grow?" was the remark of one lady. How, indeed! in places where their owners have hardly air to breathe themselves. But the plants were there; many, too, flourishing and bright as if from the country; and, as I before said, each having with it its own history. One proudly shown, a simple plant of the genus of the staff of life, the produce of one grain of wheat, in the shape of not one single blade of corn, but many, bearing some sixteen ears, full fat ears, the produce as I said of one grain, which came, I was told, from an ear plucked at Hampstead. Simple this, I own, to those who will not look beneath the surface; but how much it tells of the care and patience of the grower; and it is not in such a home of the poor as that grain of corn was tended that we should look for filthy habits, riot, and drunkenness. This bore no prize ticket, like many another, and doubtless disappointment was keenly felt by scores of exhibitors, but it seemed to me to be to one of the kind that would set earnestly at work to produce something better for another year. And that six-foot-high fuchsia, the competing plant of a gas-man and the admiration of all, was it not owned by one who had taken his prize three years running? So, at least, said some of his competitors.

It was a charming sight—one that taught, too, how, in spite of the praisers of the good old times, the bonds between rich and poor are getting drawn closer, and that the old hiatus is gradually getting bridged over. The tent and enclosure were at five o'clock crowded, not merely by a fashionable assemblage, but with a goodly mingling of the many inhabitants of poor and rich Westminster. Mothers and fathers were there again and again, proud of their children's plants, crowding in to see them, as if something upon which their eyes had never before rested; and mothers and fathers were there too, proudly scanning their own productions.

It was a gay sight, and though we had a strong force of police upon the ground, it was not to preserve order; there was no need of any such arrangement; and their duty was to discourse sweet music.

Many of the exhibitors seemed to be good, sturdy working men; but though it may seem a strange display of taste, the exhibitors of the third class were those which found more favour in my eyes, many of whom

approached very nearly to the young gentlemen known as "street Arabs"—the attendants at the Ragged Schools. For even the cultivation of a simple flower must have a good tendency; and for a boy of that class to have made a step in the right direction must be something worthy of our notice, while that first step may be that which leads him to better things. Naive enough were many of the remarks to be heard on all sides, such as the following:—"Ah! Sarah; mother's got a second prize, and I've got a fourth!" Can any one imagine the home from whence that voice proceeded minus flowers in future times? Why, those winners of second and fourth prizes will be carried home and treasured as if so much gold, ready for display to the eager eyes of the whole court.

No one can withhold their sympathies from Dean Stanley and his lady, finding, too, an able coadjutor in the Earl of Shaftesbury, who distributed the prizes to the successful competitors. As to his warmly applauded remarks upon the movement, I need say but little, beyond that their reception was a proof of their suitability. The exhibition was graced by that daughter of our Sovereign whose gentle, womanly nature, has won the love of every true Englishman—need I say the Princess Alice?—who expressed her admiration of the display and its purpose.

Too many of our poor suffer hardly in their homes, not merely from the precariousness of income, but from the rapacity of their landlord. Things of beauty about those homes are few enough; and a movement that encourages the produce among them of those simple gifts of nature, should have the support of all who have the good of their fellows at heart. But a day or two since there was a similar exhibition at Middlesex Hospital, and, doubtless, there have been others; but in how many other parts of London is the soil waiting for some philanthropic hand to sow the good seed that shall inevitably blossom into goodly plants, ready to gladden the homes of thousands, tempting them on and on in the love of the pure and beautiful? That the seed will flourish none can doubt: to-day's experience has proved it; while far gone, indeed, in vice and wretchedness is the heart of him who has lost the inborn love for a simple flower."

CAUSES OF POVERTY IN THE FAR EAST.

I AM often asked if the distress of the poor is not brought on by their own improvidence and drinking habits. Undoubtedly it is so in many cases. These we cannot help, except by giving a loaf now and then for the sake of the children. But the poverty of many, very many, is occasioned by their being out of work. Trade has been very dull in London for more than a year. The poor are generally able "to get themselves round" in the summer; but this year those engaged in the docks, more especially, have not had the opportunity. Then a poor widow with five or six children has a hard struggle to care for them, and work 'at shirt-making, boot-binding, or a mangle; and, besides these, are a great many wretched, shiftless poor, who cannot do anything properly. This is more the fault of their bringing up than their own; and we are trying to prevent this in the next generation by

our Schools, &c. These people go out *cleaning* (?), sell things in the streets, and some would best be described in the words of a poor woman who said, "My husband is a casualty man." How are these people to live? We do not wish to pauperise them. Nothing requires so much the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove as visiting and helping the poor. Are there not people in other stations of life who seem as if they could not get on, who every now and then require a helping hand? Can we wonder if it is so among the very poor? And then, do we not know the heavy demands made upon us in illness—how the invalid can only take that which he fancies? What, then, must it be with them when the bread-winner is laid by? Certainly their fancies often are not what we should consider luxuries; for one little sick girl told me she could eat nothing but a "trotter," and I found two could be bought for a penny. But how discouraging it is for the wife, who has got a piece of fish or chop for her sick husband—it has to be cooked in the room, and, after the smell of the cooking, he cannot eat any of it.

We have known families who have suffered for months, and often wondered at their patience, their capacity to bear. But the poor have great faith in God as a Father, and "it will be better soon, please God;" and I have sometimes thought poor living prevents the feelings being so acute; they get listless and spiritless after a time, and can we wonder?

But it is in these heavy trials the faith of the Christian shines brightly; and often do I think of the injunction to do good, "especially to them who are of the household of faith." One poor woman, telling her anxiety about food and rent, added, "I should have sunk under it, if I had not found my Saviour last year, before these trials came. He helps me to bear it, and it must be for some good purpose." But for those who have the trials, and not the consolations of religion—those who in this world have the tribulations, but have not peace in Christ—how sad it is for them! May these heavy afflictions be blessed, as they have been, to many! I never felt the beauty of some hymns till I heard them sung by the poor people. Listen to a group of hard-working women in a Mothers' Meeting as they sing—

> "Though often here we're weary, there is sweet rest above,
> A rest that is eternal, where all is peace and love.
> Oh, let us then press forward, that glorious rest to gain;
> We'll soon be free from sorrow, from toil, and care, and pain."

Is it not a very sad thing for the poor of London, that so many of the middle class, and all the higher, live out of the city? The influence the more educated cannot fail to exert over the poorer is thus lost. The latter all live together, thousands in one locality. There is no kind Christian gentleman to lend a helping hand, no district lady calling in, no little delicacy sent from the home table to the poor invalid. Individuality is lost, and we have to deal with them as masses; and though much is being done by devoted City Missionaries, courageous Bible Women, and other agencies, it is very little in comparison with the need of our million-peopled city.

None but those intimately acquainted with the state of our great cities can have any idea of the sin, poverty, and degradation of so many of our fellow-creatures in this Christian land—this land of Bibles and schools, and this

age of benevolence and philanthrophy; and often the question forces itself before me, Are not Christians partly to blame? How few of the poor are seen in our places of worship! Look at some of our London churches and chapels situated in the midst of these streets; look at the empty seats, and then look at the people outside. Something is already being done, but more remains; the labourers are few. I am more than ever convinced, in looking round, and seeing "the trail of the serpent over all," that the Gospel of Him who was sent to bruise the serpent's head is the only remedy; but it is a great comfort to know that, though

Sin's the wound, Christ's the cure.

LIMEHOUSE RAG-COLLECTING BRIGADE.

THE Limehouse Rag Brigade, which will soon have completed two years of its existence, has just issued its first Report. Its establishment was suggested by a friend, who had been on the committee of the original Rag Brigade, and being also greatly interested in the Union Jack Shoeblack Brigade, thought that a similar institution might, with advantage, be founded in connection with this latter society. Several gentlemen residing in the East-end of London formed a committee, and advanced among themselves £180 as capital wherewith to commence operations; and the managers of the old Brigade having most kindly placed at their disposal the trucks formerly used by that Brigade, the Union Jack Rag Collecting Brigade started quietly on its course in July, 1866, with two trucks and eight boys.

Various causes necessitated changes, from time to time, in the staff of the Brigade, and it was not till the close of the year 1867 that the committee were able to make satisfactory arrangements for conducting the work of the warehouse. They are now happy to think that these preliminary difficulties are, to all appearance, surmounted, and that they have at length arrived at a correct and practicable mode of directing the work, which will only require occasional modifications to adapt it to the varying circumstances of the Brigade.

The day's work is conducted as follows:—All the boys meet at the home of the Union Jack Shoeblack Brigade at a quarter past seven for prayers, after which they have breakfast supplied to them at a low tariff. The trucks then start for their respective destinations, and the younger boys go to their work in the warehouse, which consists in sorting what has been previously collected by the trucks. In this they have the benefit of careful instruction and kindly supervision. At half-past twelve an hour is allowed for dinner, and work ceases at six in summer and half-past five in winter.

On Monday and Tuesday evenings the boys are all required to attend school at the Shoeblack Home. On Friday evening there is practice with the drum-and-fife band, and on Thursday drill. On Sunday morning the united Brigades attend the service at Limehouse Church, and in the evening are required to be present at their various Ragged Schools.

Since the establishment of the Brigade 50 boys have been employed in it,

of whom some have left of their own accord, some have gone to sea, others have obtained situations, and 21 remain at the present time; of these, 4 go out with the trucks, and 17 are engaged in sorting.

The wages of the boys vary according to a regular scale, the truck boys receiving from 4s. 6d. to 6s. 6d. per week, the sorting boys from 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. per week, beyond which sums all increase in pay depends entirely upon good conduct and efficiency, &c. One great advantage is attached to this mode of employment, viz., the opportunity it affords of providing occupation for much younger boys than commonly enter the Shoeblack Brigades, who are thus early withdrawn from the streets, with their innumerable evil influences.

The staff consists of 23 boys, 1 sorter, 1 superintendent, and 2 collectors. During the year 1867 there were collected 118 tons of paper, rags, and rope, and 11,232 bottles, besides numerous other articles, for which has been paid at the market rates £976 2s. 8d.

Owing to the general depression of trade, the Brigade was in considerable financial difficulty during the last half of the year 1867; and had it not been for the liberality of a member of the committee in advancing the necessary funds, our operations must have been brought to an untimely end.

The operations of the Brigade during the four months of the present year have, so far as can be ascertained, been decidedly successful, so that the committee are encouraged to persevere with the plan of work, hoping that when the present debt is cleared off, the subscriptions, and receipts arising from the sale of goods, will fully equal the expenditure.

There can be no doubt of the great need that exists for this and every effort to provide employment and education for the destitute boys of London, in order that they may, by God's blessing, be saved from pursuing a course of idleness, leading in most cases to a life of crime, and, instead thereof, be trained to become useful, God-fearing men.

NONE TOO YOUNG TO SERVE GOD.

At a camp-meeting, the venerable Bishop M'Kendree, of the Methodist Church, was present, and preached to the children and young people. On this occasion the Bishop noticed a little boy who was much affected. Being intimately acquainted with the family, and knowing the child well, the Bishop invited him into the tent, and conversed and prayed with him, laying his hand upon his head and commending him to God. That afternoon the doors of the church were opened, and this boy went forward and presented himself as a probationer. He was received, and continued to attend regularly to his religious duties, never absenting himself from a prayer-meeting or a class-meeting, or preaching, when he could attend. He was but a mere child, and, as he would sit in class, no one, either leader or preacher, would speak to him, or pay him any attention. At this his young heart was much aggrieved, and he was sometimes tempted to go no more; but he continued to hold on till his grandfather, who was a preacher, should visit them, and

he would speak to him on the subject. At length the grandfather came; and, when he was sitting alone one day, he came to him and said,—

"Grandfather, I want to ask you a question."

"Well, my child," said the old man, "what is your wish?"

"It is this," said he; "Do you think I am too young to serve God and belong to the Church?"

"No, not at all, my child," said the venerable saint, with emotion. "Your mother embraced religion when she was only seven years of age; and we have many examples in the Bible of children who became religious in the dawn of life, such as Samuel, and Josiah, and Timothy; and the Scriptures say, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings' God has 'perfected praise.' But why did you ask this question?"

"At a camp-meeting," said the child, "when Bishop M'Kendree preached to us children, I resolved I would be a Christian; and when brother C—— opened the doors of the church, I went forward and joined. I have been to meeting every time since, and stayed in class; but no person says a word to me about religion, and I thought they considered me too young to be noticed."

"Well," said his grandfather, "I will go with you to the meeting next Sunday, and, if the preacher does not speak to you when he meets the class, rise up, and ask him the reason. Do you understand?"

"Yes, grandfather, I will."

The day came, and the grandfather and the child were at the meeting. When the congregation was dismissed, the preacher commenced leading his class, and all were spoken to, as usual, but the little boy. He made an effort to rise; but his heart failed him. His grandfather, seeing this, said, "Brother L——, little J—— has a question to ask you." The child then rose, and, in a simple manner, gave his experience, not forgetting to allude to his not having been spoken to. At this the preacher blushed, and the class-leader wept, one after the other confessing their delinquency, and promising to do better for the future. That child is grown to manhood, has a family, and has long been a useful and highly acceptable member of the Church of Christ.

There is a moral to this touching incident. Never neglect or overlook a child. The example of Bishop M'Kendree is worthy of imitation as well as of admiration of every Ragged School teacher.

OUT FOR THE DAY.

WHAT varied feelings are excited by the simple words "Out for the Day." For example, a message is sent to a doctor to call on a patient in danger—but he is out; a man of business seeks for aid from a friend to meet a pressing call—but he is out; or a relative from the country has a day-ticket—but he finds his relation out for the day. In all these cases out for the day are words of sadness; but in the lips of a holiday-making child it tells of a jubilant feeling, which words are poor to describe. Nor can we wonder; for, if the children of the Queen, as described in her pleasant "Leaves,"

gleefully hailed a picnic with their royal parents in the forest of Balmoral, how much deepeer must be the joy of a poor child whose holiday, like Christmas, comes only once a year!

Such were the feelings of those who participated in the annual excursion to Richmond of the Ragged School Union. This great event came off on August 7th. The pouring rain all night gave little promise of the brilliant sky which greeted the excursionists when they entered Richmond. Hence though most teachers were provided with umbrellas, they were found to be more useful as sun-shades than for any other purpose.

The company included 1,700 scholars and friends from 17 Day Ragged Schools. When they reached Richmond the procession was headed by the bands of the Richmond British School, and Ferdinand Place Ragged School. The several Schools came down in two divisions, by the North-Western and South-Western Railways, under the conduct of the officials of the central society. Very startling were the remarks of some of the children who had escaped the noise of this great Babel for the first time. Thus some, when they saw the orchards of Kew, exclaimed, "Oh, teacher! *why* there's apples growing on trees!" Another who had never been in the country said, "I could not sleep all night, thinking of Richmond." Poor child! she only knew the country by name, for it had not been her lot ever to gather a nosegay of wild flowers, or to wreath the daisy-chain so dear to country children.

We need only add that all that makes up a child-holiday was plentifully supplied; for, thanks to the response of our friends to Lord Shaftesbury's appeal, adequate funds were supplied. The cake, indeed, was so abundant, that many carried the greater part home in their bags to give it, as they said, to "baby," or "mother." Toys and fruit were abundantly distributed. Fire-balloons went up; and if some, through the wind, failed in their skyward ascent, that only added to the fun. One old and valued friend of the Union added to his popularity by giving pennies to the penniless from an apparently inexhaustible pocket. All reached home safely, with the earnest hope that, if spared to see 1869, we shall have to record in our magazine another "out for the day" of the Ragged Schools of London.

Poet's Corner.

LESSON FROM A CORNFIELD.

'Twas the hour of prayer, and the farmer stood,
With a thankful heart and a lowly mind,
And prayed to the Author of every good,
That the Father of all would be very kind,
And bless his creatures with raiment and food;
That the blessing each day might be renewed;
That every want might find relief,
And plenty for hunger, or joy, or grief,
Be measured out by the merciful One
To all who suffer beneath the sun.

The prayer concluded, the godly man
  Went forth in peace to inspect his farm;
And by his side delighted ran,
  Glowing with every healthful charm,
His little son, a sprightly boy,
Whose home was love, and whose life was joy.
So they rambled over the golden fields,
And the father said, "The harvest yields
A plentiful crop, my son, this year,
My barns are too small for the grain, I fear."

And they wandered on through row and row
  Of golden sheaves; and at length the child,
With earnest look and a rosy glow
  On his shining cheek, looked up and smiled,
And said, "My father, do you not pray
For the poor and needy, day by day,
That God the good would the hungry feed?"
"I do, my son." "Well, I think, as you plead"—
His eye waxed bright, for his soul shone through it,—
"That God gave you the wheat that you might do it."

Teachers' Column.

THE CROOKED STICK.

"CHRIST has a service for all his members," said James Therrall, an old carpenter in a village on Salisbury Plain, to a young Christian who complained that she was unworthy to work for the Lord. "Let not one of the members say, 'The Head has no need of me.' I used to think as you do long ago, but He taught me otherwise by a crooked stick.

One day my son went to a sale of timber, and in the lot was a stick (or piece) so twisted and bent, that I spoke sharply to him saying: 'You have a bad bargain there, lad, that crooked stick will be of no use to any one.'

'It's all timber,' replied my son,—not the least vexed by my reproof. 'I paid the same price for it as the rest. Depend upon it, no tree grows for nothing. Wait a bit; don't fret, father; let us keep a look out; there's a place somewhere for it.'

A little time after this, I had a cottage to build; a queer bit of a house it was, and pretty enough when it was finished. There was a corner to turn in it, and not a stick in the yard would fit. I thought of the crooked one and fetched it. Many a hard day's work would have failed to prepare a joist like it. It seemed as if the tree had grown especially for the purpose. 'Then,' said I, 'there's a place for the crooked stick after all! Then there's a place for poor James Therrall. Dear Lord, show him the place into which he may fit in building thy heavenly temple.' That very day I learned, what God gives me he gives me for his glory, and poor and unlettered as I was, there was a work for me. There is a work for *you*. God has something for *you* to do, and nobody else can do it."

This village carpenter had neither the knowledge of the schools, nor had he taken a degree at college, yet was he a teacher of divine truths, and he was

wise in the wisdom of the children of light. He would often recur to the time when, looking solely on his own weakness and infirmities, he overlooked his only source of strength, and thought he was too poor and ignorant to do anything for the Lord he loved! He lived to a good old age, a blessing to the souls in his neighbourhood, and where, as he liked best to say, he watched for his Master.

When some who loved their ease too well, or child, or servant, or sick one complained, "I can do nothing!" he would point to the best built cottage on the Plain, with its pretty bay window and slanting roof, and tell them he had once thought the same himself, but his error had been corrected by a dumb instructor—a beam in that roof—a crooked stick which seemed fit for nothing: but it found its proper place in the building at last, and gave it a grace and strength which no other timber, however superior in other respects, could have imparted. Thus the warped tree had preached to him a sermon on true humility, and made him from that day an humble steward of the things of the kingdom.

IMPORTUNITY.

THIS word occurs only once in Scripture: "Because of his *importunity* he will rise and give him" (Luke xi. 8). Its meaning and substance is found in many passages, which we shall do well seriously to ponder.

It may be looked at two ways. God's importunity with man in testimony, and man's importunity with God in prayer. God hath manifested it towards us, and He calls for it from us. Look at God by the prophets rising early and speaking unto Israel for many ages. Consider the conduct of Christ when on earth, how importunate he was with sinners to be saved. So it was with the apostles; "in Christ's stead they *besought* men to be reconciled to God." We should seek to realise this, and also to manifest it in dealing with souls.

If we would possess this zeal for the salvation of souls, we must be importunate in prayer. The Lord Jesus was lovingly importunate, as his history, the prophetic utterances in the Psalms and the prophets, also the testimony of the apostles, abundantly prove. To us he says, after giving us a parable to illustrate importunity: "I say unto you, ASK, SEEK, KNOCK." There are many instances of such importunity in the Scriptures: Abraham pleading for Sodom, Jacob praying at Peniel, Moses interceding for Israel, the woman of Canaan, and the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. xii.), are specimens. Frequent and fervent ejaculatory prayer is an evidence of importunity.

We should have something definite before us in order to be importunate (Luke xi. 13). We should aim to realise the true character of God and the vastness of his gifts.

Why does the Lord love importunity? Because it is like himself, like his heavenly Father, like the Holy Spirit. It shows faith in him, evinces a high estimate of spiritual things, presents a bright example to others, and must issue in blessing both to teacher and scholar.

Children's Gallery.

HOW THE POOR HELP THE POORER.

IT is pleasing to know how the poor help the poorer. In fact, with their small means they often do much more than the rich, and so really imitate the poor widow who cast her mite into the treasury. Thus we have known them to

divide their only loaf of bread, that they might help a starving family, and they seemed to think that they had not done anything worthy of thanks. "We only did what everybody ought to do," said they. So, too, when they are without money, they give service in such a ready and kindly spirit that no money could purchase it. Not rarely, too, we have known a poor woman adopt an orphan who was not related to her, solely because it had no friends, and she did not wish it to be sent to the workhouse.

A striking case in point is furnished by our friends who labour in George Yard Ragged School.

A number of men and women (who call George Yard their new birthplace) have formed themselves into a band of Christian brother and sisterhood, for the purpose of visitation, and carrying the Gospel of Jesus Christ wherever they can. They visit the sick and afflicted, and pray and read with them, sitting up all night with any poor sick persons who need constant attendance; they also sweep and clean out their rooms, doing a little washing for them, mend their clothes, get meals ready, see the children washed and sent off to the Ragged School, put children to bed, hear them say their prayers, or teach them to pray. Nor is this all; for they give to the poor, needy sick, broth, gruel, and other nourishing things that they may require; towards the expense of which each one voluntarily pays a trifle a week.

May we not, then, say to you, Do not merely admire the way in which the poor help the poor, but, "Go thou, and do likewise?"

SELLING THE WHEELBARROW.

It was in January, not many years ago, and in the ancient city of Antwerp. The beautiful streets were almost deserted, the cold was so intense; but our story leads us into a dark and narrow lane, and a poor room, in which it was as cold as out of doors. In this wretched abode a thinly-clad young woman sat weeping by the bedside of a child, which looked as if it was soon to be laid in a bed where cold and hunger are felt no more. Near the stove—in which, however, no wood was burning—stood a little boy of about six years, asking for bread. His mother gave no reply, but, after a while, the request was repeated: "Do, mother, give me something, if it's ever so little; I can't bear the hunger." And the mother gave him a small piece of bread, and said, "I wanted it for your little sister; but I fear she will not require it any more." Little Hansel seized it eagerly, but returned half of it for the sick child.

Soon afterwards the father of the family entered, deep sorrow and disappointment on his wan countenance. "We are very unhappy, Theresa," said he to his wife; "I have stood the whole day at the train with my wheelbarrow, and have not earned a farthing." Little Hansel asked, "Have you brought me something to eat?" But the father's face was so stern that the child was afraid, and said, "I won't ask again." When the father looked at the sick child, his soul was overwhelmed with distress and anguish. "Nothing remains for me," he exclaimed at last, "but to *sell my wheelbarrow*."

It is the custom in Antwerp that every Friday a kind of auction is held in the market-place, to which people bring whatever they have to sell. The poor man brought his wheelbarrow, and waited till his turn came.

Now, it so happened that two rich young ladies were just then passing that way, and, being struck with the sad expression of the man's countenance, stood beside him, and heard him telling his story to a neighbour. After consulting with each other, they bought the wheelbarrow for twenty-seven francs, to the great astonishment and amusement of the bystanders. They paid immediately, and asked him to take it home for them. He requested them to allow him to go first to his house, and, after hearing where it was, said they could go that way. On

their road there, they bought potatoes, bread, rice, and wood. It was all put on the wheelbarrow, and soon they were before the poor man's door. They followed him into his room, and what a scene presented itself to their view! The woman lay fainting on the floor, and the little boy was crying bitterly. A fire was soon lighted, and Hansel's hunger appeased. They now told the poor man that the wheelbarrow and all its contents were his, and they would in future help him and give him employment. After having promised to send a doctor to see the child they took their leave. The poor parents could scarcely believe in their deliverance; they were unable to utter a single word of gratitude.

The ladies were silent for a long time on their way home. At last one of them said, "There can be no greater blessedness on earth than to be sent by God to relieve the poor in their distress." From that time they devoted themselves to the poor, visiting from house to house in the most destitute streets, and bringing help and consolation to the needy.—*Good Words.*

Editor's Note-book.

THE CHRISTIAN'S MISSION.

THERE is, perhaps, says Sir E. Buxton, no one point which requires more to be pressed on the attention of Christian men, women, and children, in the present day, than this,—that every one is sent into this world with a mission; that is, for some particular object. Man is not sent here merely to vegetate and die,—he is sent to do something for his Master; and there is no one who has not some talent which he can employ for God. *Every one has a mission.*

We know what the world consider to be their mission,—just to live as happily and comfortably as they can,—just to kill time, without any thought of what will become of them when they are called from earth. And what do many Christians regard as their one and only business in this world? Why, they think that their mission is to take care of the salvation of their own souls, and that when they have secured that, they have done all that is required of them.

Now, that is but the BEGINNING of the work, not the end. Having been led to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, having become united to him by a living faith, and thus been saved for ever, you were then to work, not for yourselves only, but for your fellow-creatures,—for mankind. Having been raised up "from death unto life," show the life which is in you; show it in action, press forward in your Christian course, and let your Master see that you are willing to do all that he has commanded you to do in his service.

Endeavour to discover WHAT IS YOUR MISSION IN THE WORLD. "Mission" may appear a cant word, but it contains the sum and substance of Christian usefulness in the world. Endeavour to find out what gifts God has imparted to you, and set yourselves to work with them; and whether the door may be wide or narrow, whether it be in your power to benefit many or only few, if you do the work which God in his providence has given you to do, you will at the last hear your Master say of you, "He has done what he could." WHAT WE CAN is all that our Master requires.

Our Library Table.

Earnest Hearts. By W. Quin. London: Book Society.

When we notice the earnestness of the present age, both in politics and science, we cannot but think that very many professing Christians might gather lessons of duty and diligence from those whose hopes are centred on this world. Whatever the worldling may be, he at least is not *half*-hearted, but what he does—be it for good or for evil—is done thoroughly. But this is not always the case with those who profess to live for Jesus; nay, even some teachers are ofttimes so lukewarm that their classes catch the infection, and thus no spiritual good is effected. The object of this little work is to check this icyness, and this it does both by sound argument and by striking anecdote. It is then well calculated to increase the earnestness of those who are already in earnest, and to awaken a sense of responsibility in those who now labour in a perfunctory spirit.

The Birds we See. By M. K. M. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

The cruelty of English children to dumb animals is a stigma on the national character. And we cannot doubt that the brutality which characterises so many of the men of the lower class is due to this; for they only develop in manhood, habits which they acquired in childhood. We are, then, glad to see in many Ragged Schools, texts from Holy Writ inculcating kindness to the animal creation posted on the walls; and cannot but think that such a silent daily teacher will be a most effective one. All, indeed, that can make us regard animals as dumb friends tends to develop kindly feelings generally, and thus kindness to a cat or dog will have such a reflex influence that our fellowmen will also be treated in a kindly spirit. A book like this, which is replete with interesting facts illustrative of bird-life, is calculated to develop such feelings, and thus it has a moral purpose the value of which cannot be exaggerated. The work being clearly written, and full of matter of interest to children, will make an excellent addition to Ragged School libraries.

Our Little Ragged Friends. London: Kitto.

Written by an experienced worker in Ragged Schools, this work abounds with striking narratives of life as it is in the Far East. There being no colouring for effect, all the incidents, remarkable as some are, are reliable. As conveying an idea of its method, we have made an extract at p. 204, under the title, "Causes of Poverty in the Far East." We heartily recommend this book to our readers, feeling persuaded that, based as it is on earnest labour, it will deepen their sympathy with our work and the workers.

Correspondence.

MANCHESTER EDUCATION-AID SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—In your volume for 1866, you referred to a plan about to be tried in Manchester to educate the Ragged class. The following indicates the plan, and some of the results of this experiment:—

The Manchester Education-Aid Society was commenced in the year 1864, with a view to aid that class of parents to educate their children whose means are too small to admit of their paying the entire school-fees. This has

been carried on by instituting a careful inquiry into the circumstances of all families applying for aid; the amount of assistance granted being in proportion to the income of the family per head. The choice of school has been invariably left to the parents; and, whilst perfect liberty of conscience is thus secured to both parent and child, schools of all denominations are admitted to rank upon the Society's books. The amount of work accomplished will appear from the following annual statement:—Number of children attending school at the end of the year 1865, 3,701; 1866, 7,200; 1867, 9,490.

The Committee point out that the Society has been of use in the following particulars:—1. In providing education for many thousands of poor children who, otherwise, had apparently no means of instruction. 2. In encouraging the increase of new schools in poor and populous districts. 3. In furnishing information as to the numbers and condition of the uneducated in the two boroughs. 4. In proving that it is possible for a committee, composed of men of all shades of religious and political opinions, to work together in perfect harmony in providing education for the poor.

The funds of the Society are derived solely from voluntary subscriptions and donations. The annual expenditure, in payment of school-fees and small working expenses, has been about £2,000. But as the expenditure, in payment of school-fees, has now attained a maximum of £600 per quarter, the income of the year will fall far short of the required sum. This state of matters is accounted for by the circumstance that, year by year, the income has diminished, while the expenditure has increased.

Yours, &c.,

A B. C.

Notices of Meetings.

LAMB AND FLAG.

On Wednesday, July 8, Sir William H. Bodkin, the assistant-judge, again displayed that seasonable and practical benevolence for which he has been so long distinguished, by regaling the poor scholars of the Lamb and Flag Ragged Schools, and their teachers, at his pleasant and picturesque retreat at West Hill, Highgate. This was the fifteenth entertainment of the kind given by Sir William Bodkin. No less than 217 of the children, boys and girls—looking very neat and clean for their position in life, and showing that on certain occasions they have parents who are willing to strain a nerve to give their poor offspring a holiday aspect for once in the long twelvemonth. Thirty of the teachers and friends accompanied the young pleasurists. Sir Wm. Bodkin, Lady Bodkin, Mr. Joseph Payne, and other friends, met the party. A substantial and plentiful repast of beef, bread, vegetables, and milk and ginger-beer was spread out upon long tables temporarily erected on the lawn, and it is needless to say that there was no lack of justice in the way in which the juvenile throng treated these good things. At the conclusion of the feast, a large basket of toys was distributed amongst the younger children. About five o'clock in the evening the signal was given for the children to reassemble, and the invitation having been promptly obeyed, the party, having again had their appetites sharpened by

their two or three hours' energetic recreation in the fields, sat down, and partook of tea with an alacrity as eager and as unsparing as that which they had exhibited at the dinner-table. After tea,

Sir WILLIAM BODKIN said he was heartily pleased to have the opportunity of welcoming them to his house for the fifteenth time. The conduct and general appearance of the children on this occasion had pleased him very much indeed, and he could only say that he would be very glad to welcome them to a day's enjoyment of a similar kind if he was spared for another year. Their good behaviour on this, and, indeed, on all previous occasions, had encouraged him to continue these annual festivities, and whilst he had to compliment them all on the way in which they had conducted themselves, he could not let this opportunity pass without saying a word of praise for their conductors and teachers, who had, by a system of careful and methodical management, taught them how to be good boys and girls. He hoped they would continue upright and well-behaved through life, and become good men and women, and good and useful members of society. He hoped sincerely, also, that they would never lose sight of the high and holy truths of the Gospel, which were the safest and best guides to goodness in this world, and everlasting happiness in the world to come.

We should not omit to mention that during the whole of the day a bazaar was held in Sir William Bodkin's drawing-room, the proceeds of which were given in aid of the funds of the schools, and there were present at this part of the day's entertainment many ladies and gentlemen who had come a considerable distance, in order to see the children and to take part in the hospitable proceedings.

WHITECROSS PLACE.

The twentieth annual meeting of the above Schools was recently held at the Friends' Meeting-house, Bishopsgate Street. Mr. R. N. Fowler presided.

From the Report the following items are gathered: The average attendance shows a little increase upon last year. During the past three months there have been—boys, morning school, 45; infants, morning and afternoon, 150; boys, evening school, 40; girls, evening school, 30. Highest daily attendance, 284. Number on the books from the commencement is 7,863. Twenty-five children have gone from the schools to situations, and eleven would come up to receive the Ragged School Union Prize for faithful service; twelve boys have entered the Shoeblack Society. The Penny Bank has had 268 depositors, with a total of £98 13s. 9d. In the present year there have been to the end of March 175 depositors, against 161 in 1867, contributing £43 2s. 8d., against £33 8s. 1d. in 1867. A Coal Club with sixty-nine members had contributed £13 2s. 6d., and received ten tons of coals. The Clothing Club, a Shoe Club, Mothers' Meetings (held twice a week), Band of Hope (once a fortnight), and the Lending Library, are all continued in active operation. Ten meat dinners have been given to about forty-five children.—The following is from Mr. Dixon, the Secretary of the Sunday School: The average attendance is, afternoon, boys, 26; girls, 49: Evening, boys, 41; girls, 76. There have been collected for the purpose of relieving urgent distress, £5 8s. 5d. The children's treat took place on August 21st, at Loughton. On Christmas morning the elder children, in number 130, were provided with their usual breakfast, after which they went with their teachers to the Christmas morning service at Finsbury Chapel. In connection with the Ragged School, religious services are held, and have been made a blessing. 3,334 quarts of soup have been given away; coal and bread (given by the Philanthropic Society) have been distributed. There is a balance of 17s. 2½d. in the treasurer's hands.

The Rev. A. M'Auslane, Mr. Reed, Mr. Hopgood, Rev. R. T. Phillips, Mr. Watson, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Jilks addressed the meeting.

Papers, Original and Selected.

RAGGED SCHOOL NURSERIES.

BABY-FARMS AND BABY-MURDER.

As one sad legacy of Adam's sin, society seems to be doomed to be startled at intervals by some gigantic form of evil. It seems to have no youth, but to spring up full-grown. Thus recently we directed the attention of our readers to one growing evil, namely, that influx of juvenile thieves' literature which is training our youth for the hulks. But there is another prominent social evil, which in some degree affects the class among whom we are called to labour—we refer to baby-farming, *alias* baby-murder.

That there are many BABY-FARMS in Hackney and other outlying districts of London, facts, more startling than those which spring from the pen of a romance-writer, too truly prove. There children, usually the offspring of sin, are farmed out by their mothers, at a weekly sum which almost suggests starvation. Untended by their unnatural mothers, placed in the care of women who are usually drunkards, it cannot excite any surprise that inquest after inquest is now held on the bodies of infants who have died, or rather who have been slowly murdered, in such establishments. Sometimes these poor victims of neglect fall into the fire unnoticed, and are burnt alive; ofttimes they are drugged with Daffy's Elixir, and other opiates; and not rarely they are literally starved to death. That this statement is not exaggerated, the following recent cases will prove. Mary Manning was sentenced to five years' penal servitude for deliberately burning an infant. The defence was, that the woman was drunk when she set the little creature on the fire; and that she had been drinking all the afternoon with the victim's mother. The case before Mr. Baron Pigott that followed that of this monster, was that of putting a child in boiling water. An old woman, seventy-three years of age, had charge of the child while the mother, a charwoman, was out at work, deliberately put him, by way of punishment, into a pot of boiling water, which peeled off the skin, from the waist to the feet. Then there is the case of Mrs. Billups, a baby-farmer,

who, when charged with the death of two children entrusted to her, was too drunk to speak. All these cases are but the experiences of a few days. They are enough, however, with the long list of cruelty to children which has immediately preceded them, to justify the assertion that a system of baby-farming, of the cruellest description, is active in every part of this country.

This crime—adding a blacker stain to the awful catalogue of British crime—seems to be growing in our midst. The denunciations of juries, and the exhortations of the press, have not checked this crying sin; for the parents, who are lost to all shame, persist in a course which, if unchecked, must eventually bring down national judgments. For we may be quite sure of this, that the cry of "the blood of the young innocents" (Jer. ii. 34) will not appeal to Heaven in vain: and thus national ruin, as in the case of Israel, will spring out of national sin.

As philanthropy has failed in closing the doors of these baby-farms, we think that the Government is bound at once to grapple with and strangle this terrible crime. In no other country would bad mothers be permitted to commit their children to the care of a circle of drunken women—not mere units, but a confederacy—without the supervision of the police. Already we inspect lunatic asylums and workhouses, and yet how often infractions of the law—nay, how often acts of cruelty—are undetected! Still, if such asylums are ofttimes so bad *with* inspection, we can readily infer what they would be without it. Now surely, if such inspection is required in the interests of adults, how much more is it demanded in behalf of those who cannot tell their tale of misery?—

> "An infant crying in the night,
> And with no language but a cry."

We think, indeed, that no one should be permitted to keep a baby-farm without it was first visited and licensed by the magistracy. This would necessarily entail inspection; not with that prior notice which would cause it to be dressed up for the occasion, but at unspecified hours, so that the establishment might be seen as it really is. Then, and not till then, shall we cease to be affrighted by finding it recorded in the daily papers that another child has been killed in a baby-farm.

We hinted that on the Continent provision is made for the charge of infants whose mothers are at work. In France this is especially the case: for during the past twenty years the *Crèche*,

or infant nursery, has been a prominent feature of its great cities. In these establishments, infants under two years of age are received from eight in the morning till eight in the evening, the hours during which the poor mothers, chiefly fruit and fish sellers, are from home. When the infant is brought by the mother it is washed all over, and then clad in the nursery uniform. The infants are fed at stated intervals, under medical advice, by experienced nurses. One nurse takes charge of six infants, and is, in fact, its mother for the day. The buildings are well ventilated and well lighted, so that the cheerfulness of the building has such a reflex influence on the babies that they become bright and cheerful. From the parent institution in Paris, the system has spread through France, so that there are now above four hundred infant nurseries in the great cities of France.

Some benevolent ladies—who were wise as well as philanthropic—attempted, about twelve years ago, to acclimatise this system in London. Many admirable institutions were opened, the public at first liberally responding to the appeal of the managers. It was felt to be a wise economy thus to husband public health, for increased strength in the labouring classes implied closed workhouses and a contented population. Hence to begin at the cradle was felt to be an essential to success, for when the body is debilitated by unfit food, bad air, and over-work, it is usually too late to set about the work of reformation. To say the least, a sickly population is the most expensive of all, for a sickly people implies a pauper population. In our over-crowded cities the hospital is but the antechamber to the workhouse. No wiser act of benevolence, then, was ever conceived, than that of opening, in poor and squalid neighbourhoods—where cellars were houses, and gutters playgrounds—a spacious ventilated chamber, where the little ones, in the first years of precarious life, might get out of the bad home influences, and sleep in pure air, and under intelligent eyes. But after some time infant nurseries were supplanted in public esteem by some other scheme of social amelioration, and the few which remain are not as well supported as they deserve to be. For surely the truest form of charity is to help the poor to help themselves.

We are glad, however, to intimate that with this blight on the infant nursery movement, there are at least two Ragged Schools which have added this plan to their other schemes of social reform. One of these is planted amid the dustyards of Paddington, and

the other is situated in the very heart of the thieves' quarter of Southwark.

The infant nursery connected with the Ragged School in Church Street, Paddington, has been opened above ten years. Having visited it several times, we can testify to the kindness shown by the Matron to her infant family. The infants are received from seven A.M. to eight P.M. They are brought by their mothers, who are a very industrious class; they are chiefly employed in the dust-yards, or as laundresses or ironers. For infants who can walk, threepence a day is charged, but for those who can only crawl, and who are known by the expressive name of "toddlers," twopence is the charge. The room is very cheerful; many flower-pots adorn the windows, and plenty of toys are scattered about. During the past year 2,191 babies were admitted into this nursery, showing a weekly average of 38, of whom about a moiety were distinct infants. The total expense last year was £28 10s. The receipts from mothers was £19 15s. 9d., leaving £8 15s. 3d. to be made up out of the School funds. Rarely, we think, has so much moral and social benefit resulted from so small an expenditure.

The other infant nursery is of more recent origin. The Henry Street Ragged School, where it is held, is famous in the annals of crime as the home of Dick Turpin. The nursery occupies the attic story, the partitions of two rooms being removed, so as to make one large cheerful room. High above the chimney-pots of the small houses—or rather dens—below, the nursery is a marked contrast to the dingy hovels at its feet. In fact, the cheerfulness of the room has a reflex influence on the infants, for whilst those outside are wan and spiritless, those inside are exuberant in joy. No crying did we hear when we visited this nursery, but much did we witness of that sign of child-joy which is known to mothers by the name of "crowing." The infants, whose ages varied from six months to four years, were received at seven in the morning, and were to remain till seven in the evening. The daily charge is one penny, the mothers supplying the needful nourishment. They are spoken of by the mother for the day as very deserving women. They are mostly employed out of doors as fish and vegetable hawkers, or indoors as skin-dressers or fish-curers. Already some fruit has been harvested, for many have been led to attend the Mothers' Meeting, and not a few regularly attend the more public means of grace.

Need we say more to commend these nurseries to public support?

The sum paid by the mothers is not equal to the expenses, so that these nurseries have to be aided from the funds given to the general work—yet we think the money well spent. Knowing the good already effected by infant nurseries, we should be glad to see the precedent extended, at least to our larger and richer Ragged Schools. The reasons may be thus summarised. They have taught poor mothers that cleanliness and good air are better sedatives for "fractious" children than Godfrey's cordial, and those other compounds of opium which, if they do not induce lunacy, at least disturb and injure the delicate fibres of the brain. In some cases, they have led the mothers to see that little is really gained by out-of-door work, and that personal management of a home is, in the end, the truest economy. But, on the other hand, poor widows, on whose labours depended the maintenance of their families, have gone out to their daily work with the serenity which springs from knowing that their infants are really cared for. The whole district has become improved through the presence in the midst of a *model-home*. Lives, too, innumerable have been saved, and weak children have become strong through proper nursing in good air. Nor is this all. Rude, passionate women have been socialised by the Christian kindness shown to their children, and what is better, some have been won for both worlds.

GLASGOW FOUNDRY BOYS.

THE foundries of Glasgow employ a large number of boys, who generally begin their working life at eleven or twelve years of age. On entering the foundry they forsake the Sunday School, and, led by their new companions, older in years and evil experience, they begin to frequent low singing and dancing saloons and dram shops. In a short time they may sink to the lowest level of those around them, and until lately they were left to sink, as such boys still are in many other towns, without any earnest attempt to save them.

In 1865, a number of Christian men, touched by the sad condition of the boys, formed themselves into "The Glasgow Foundry Boys' Religious Society," with the view of promoting their religious, educational, and social elevation. The society is designed to be a link between the Sunday School and the church. In order to influence the boys at so critical a period of their lives, religious meetings, educational classes, musical and social meetings, and other agencies, are all united as parts of one system. The boys are thus attracted, and their spare hours are occupied in profitable and agreeable engagements. About 120 teachers, with fifty occasional assistants, are now

occupied in the work of the various meetings and classes. There are upwards of 1,000 boys under the care of the society in four different quarters of the city, viz., Cowcaddens, Gorbals, Anderston, and Bridgeton.

The religious meetings in each section have given every cause for satisfaction, both in regard to the large attendance of the boys, and their general conduct. There is now an average total attendance of 700 twice every Sabbath. The Sunday forenoon junior meetings are a feature of the work which deserves the attention of Sunday School managers in other similar neighbourhoods. Although the boys would attend the Sunday evening meetings, it was found extremely difficult to overcome their habits of Sabbath desecration in the early part of the day. The committee therefore instituted short and simple services, to which they gathered the younger brothers and sisters of the boys on Sunday mornings, so as to train them in habits of Sabbath observance. The directors, in their report, add, "The wants of neglected children cannot be said to be properly met until every Sabbath School has its own Sabbath-day meeting."

These boys, who are brought together on Sunday mornings, are formed into twenty-one Bible Classes, the subject in all of them being the life of Christ, based on Mimpriss's Harmony. The classes, after being taught separately, are examined simultaneously, and the map of Christ's journeys is found useful in fixing localities and events in their minds.

"The Christian information imparted, and the Sabbath-observing habits formed at these meetings," say the directors, "must largely influence the subsequent career of these young people. And these considerations should be seriously weighed by those members of churches who are able to assist in the work of such meetings or classes, and who are not presently engaged in it. If it is important that churches be open twice a day, much more imperative is it that at least equally frequent opportunities be afforded to those who have no other church than the school or the meeting-house. And let those who have not given themselves to this work remember the gracious promise of Him who, with his disciples around Him, 'took a child, and set him in the midst of them, and when He had taken him in his arms, He said unto them, 'Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.'"

Evangelistic meetings are held in each section on Sunday evening, after the Sunday School, and the directors report that "wherever such meetings are conducted in an attractive way, boys readily come to them. Night after night these meetings are well filled, and frequently over-crowded. The gospel message is presented to the boys in simple, earnest, affectionate language, many of them having heard it there for the first time. To hear a little ragged boy before you exclaiming, after hearing of the blessedness and glory of heaven, 'No cold, no hunger! that would fit me fine!' impresses one forcibly with the appalling ignorance of these boys, and with the necessity of bringing the tidings of great joy very close to them. Although the rough and frequently disorderly manner in which the boys assemble might augur ill for the quiet of the meeting, yet it not unfrequently happens that their attention is so riveted, and the silence so intense, as to be almost painful to the speaker himself. Then, with the soul stirred and awakened to

the impulses of the higher life, the boys are dismissed, when, as it is too late to loiter on the streets, they seek such quiet as their homes afford, to think on what they have heard."

During the past winter and spring, tokens of growing earnestness among the boys led the directors of the society to arrange with the Rev. E. P. Hammond to hold a series of evangelistic meetings, specially for the poorer class of working boys and girls in the different districts of the city. Mr. Hammond threw himself with all his eagerness into the arrangement, and during the course of thirty-nine days held thirty-four meetings, addressing an aggregate of 30,000 people. These meetings were commenced in the City Hall, and afterwards in Gorbals, Townhead, Bridgeton, Partick, Cowcaddens, and Anderston, five consecutive evenings being spent in each of these seven districts. Churches were freely placed at the disposal of the society for these meetings, and the minister of the church, and a number of the neighbouring clergy, gave their countenance and assistance. At all these meetings Mr. Hammond's addresses were listened to by anxious crowds, and invariably a very large number waited to the inquiry-meetings which followed each of the services. The last meeting in each district was always the largest, and every one connected with the work felt sorry to leave one district, even although it was to do good in another. There was something delightfully cheering in seeing so many happy faces as were around us at these last meetings; and the singing of the hymns, and whole aspect of the after-meetings, were such as to leave no doubt of the fact that many, very many, there were "happy in the Lord."

Following Mr. Hammond's meetings in the various districts, upwards of twenty meetings have been held, for the purpose of continuing the good work, while he was opening up a new district. These meetings have been conducted entirely by laymen, and have been attended by an aggregate of ten thousand people, and at all of these services many remained at the inquiry-meeting. Arrangements are now making to keep up these meetings, several churches having been freely offered for that purpose.

AMSTERDAM RAGGED SCHOOL.

Mr. Kirkham, the Secretary of the Open Air Mission, recently visited Holland on a preaching tour. Amongst other institutions he visited the Ragged School in Amsterdam. Of this and a kindred institution he thus reports:—

"We spent some very pleasant hours in the Schools. One was a Ragged School, where we found from 200 to 300 children, who certainly behaved better than a similar number in an English Ragged School. They are fed with soup twice a week, and, as we happened to be there just upon dinner-time, we waited to see them eat. When the signal was given, they hurried from the upper school-room, taking their wooden shoes in their hands, so that their progress might not be impeded, putting them on again with wonderful rapidity at the foot of the stairs. When seated at the tables, they patiently waited, with the soup in plates before them, till grace was said, and

then in a moment there was such a clatter of spoons and plates as they began to eat in thorough earnest! Poor things, some of them seemed very hungry!

But our favourite School was the Christian Poor School in the Looyersgracht, under the management of an excellent Christian master, Mr. Wijle. The singing of these 600 children was very delightful. Mr. Wijle had one of our favourite hymns ("Oh, have you not heard of the beautiful stream?") translated during our stay, and taught them the tune, which they sang very well indeed. Before we came away, the children, through the master, wished us to say to the children in England that the little Dutch children hope to meet them in heaven."

That such Schools are needed the following case will indicate. Mr. Kirkham says that "on coming out of Church one Sunday morning, the first sight which arrested my attention was a man carrying a board on his back announcing a play in one of the theatres in the evening, and the last sounds I heard on the same night were fireworks going off after a concert in the public park." Ragged Schools are at least a protest against the desecration of the Lord's day: and as such, whether in England or Holland, they are of incalculable benefit to the poorer classes.

In Memoriam.

MR. JOHN BRADSHAW.

We have to record the death of another earnest labourer for God in Ragged Schools, namely, Mr. John Bradshaw, of Her Majesty's Customs, who died last June, aged forty-three. He was long known as an earnest worker in the cause of God, especially in the Ragged School, Smith's Place, St. George's-in-the-East. Of this School he and Mr. Last were the founders. He laboured in this School as Hon. Secretary and Superintendent with untiring zeal and earnestness for nearly eleven years.

In June, 1866, he was laid aside by a long and trying affliction of more than two years, brought on by breaking a blood-vessel on the lungs, causing hemorrhage of blood, followed by consumption. This he bore throughout with patient and Christian resignation to his Heavenly Father's will. Yet with his natural, earnest, active mind, it was sometimes felt by him to be very trying to remain so quiet and inactive as he was obliged to be from the extreme weakness of his body. But his time of trial was not without its mission for God. Many testify to the benefits their souls have derived in their visits to him. Many, very many, dear Christian friends have gathered around him from time to time in loving sympathy, and many and precious

have been the seasons of prayer and reading of God's holy Word in the sick room. His dear Lord was very gracious unto him in so many ways. Although it was forty days when he was first taken ill before he was able to leave his bedroom, yet after that he was never kept to his bed even for a day. Although he was so extremely weak and ill all the time, he felt it a great mercy to be permitted to rise and leave his room every day. Much was owing to the unwearied medical care and attention shown him from the first hour until the last by Dr. Dickson, Medical Inspector of Her Majesty's Customs. He was extremely sensitive to and grateful for the smallest kindness. He always spoke of heaven as "going home." On one occasion, when the Rev. J. Kennedy called to see him, he said to him, "My dear pastor, I shall see you in heaven, but I shall not expect to be anywhere near you." Mr. Kennedy smilingly replied, "Ah, my dear friend, we may be thankful indeed if we get there." "Yes," he replied, "but they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever; and you have been made a blessing to so many." On another occasion two of the Ragged School girls came to see him the week before he died. He was then very ill. They were much affected, and wept. He was pleased to see them, and made an effort to speak to them, although he could only say a few words at a time. He said, "I am going to heaven; I shall soon be there, and I shall want to see you there. Will you come? But you must give your hearts to Jesus *now*, and then I shall look to meet you there." The effort was almost too much for him. He gave them each a little book ("Heaven, and How to Get There," &c.), from which they say they will never part. Of one of them there is great hope that she does love Jesus. She says she shall never forget the many lessons of earnest teaching she received from Mr. Bradshaw in the Smith's Place Ragged School.

I mention this little circumstance of these poor girls to show the loving hearts of the poor children for their late much-loved Superintendent. Although in the School he was obliged to be very firm, especially with the boys, yet whenever he came within sight of the School, they would often be waiting in crowds round the school door, exclaiming with gladness as he approached, "Oh, here's Mr. Bradshaw! here's Mr. Bradshaw!"

He felt an especial interest in the welfare of the School until the very last, and although he knew his efforts on its behalf were over, yet did his prayers often ascend for blessings from on high to rest upon it. The last thing he did for the School before he was taken ill was to send an advertisement to the *Christian World*, asking who would help to give the poor Ragged School children of the Smith's Place School a treat? Finding it was inserted, he was very thankful, asking that God's blessing might accompany the means thus used. So deeply sensible was he that without God's blessing nothing could be successful, that he would even in smallest matters always seek it first of all. It did prove successful. God's blessing evidently attended it: for during the first several weeks of his very severe illness, when he hung as it were between life and death, the letters kept coming in one after another, containing postage-stamps of various sums for the object, with many kindly expressions of interest in the welfare of the School. It was vainly hoped that he might have been able to be present to witness the poor children enjoying their treat, but it was not so granted him. He was

gratified by knowing they did have it, although he was not able to be present.

It was a singular coincidence that the day before he died friends from the School should come to him for the same purpose—to ask permission to *use his name* in advertising for funds for the School treat this summer, to which he most willingly assented, as he was ever ready to do anything that would benefit the School in any way. He never thought any labour too much for the School when he was able to do it. On that occasion, seeing him so much worse—for he had been getting weaker and weaker for some time—feeling that he was apparently drawing near his end, one of the friends asked the then state of his mind, for he had sometimes been harassed somewhat with doubts and fears, and often spoke of his shortcomings with regret; and although he felt all his trust and hope was in the precious blood of Jesus, which cleanseth us from all sin, yet would timid thoughts of death sometimes arise in his mind. But the doubts and fears and thoughts of death seemed all to have been taken away by the dear Jesus, for he, with an effort I shall never forget, said to this friend in reply as to the state of his mind (he said a word at a time, as he was able to speak)—"I am now waiting for my dear Lord to come and fetch me home, to be with my precious Saviour for ever." "Blessed testimony to leave behind," was remarked. One friend, before leaving, read the 23rd Psalm, and the other offered prayer, thanking God for all the grace and mercy displayed towards the dear one, and for the precious testimony he was able to leave behind to God's glory. In prospect of death he would ask friends, "Pray my dear Lord to give me an easy dismissal;" so, when he was nearing his end, this was the burden of his prayer, and he asked that it may be that of others. And his dear Lord graciously granted his request. He would often say, "My dear Lord has through all my affliction dealt with me gently, even as a little child;" and so he was graciously pleased to do even until his journey's end.

Soon afterwards he looked up, as though he turned away from things of earth, and his thoughts were again with Jesus. He said, very emphatically, "*My precious Saviour.*" He opened his eyes and looked up to heaven, and his lips moved even then in prayer. And so the happy spirit passed away from earth; and as a dear old Christian friend said, "He entered heaven with prayer."

A. B.

SERVANTS HELPING THE POOR.

"As a variety to East End service," says the *Revival*, "a call comes this week from a group of domestic servants, who had been meeting weekly around a dear lady, to work for the poor of our great city. Their longing had become great, as month after month they sent off the produce of their industry for the relief of the poor and destitute, to see some one who would rehearse unto them a little about those who received their gifts, and whose joy it was to dispense some of the offerings. Their kind lady friend invited them to tea, after which we had some solemn conversation on women's duties in domestic life; their special freedom from care and responsibility; the fearful want among thousands of families in our city; the great blessing when

mistresses and servants were one-hearted in gathering up the fragments 'that nothing be lost'; how crusts, too often thrown away, with a little care and small expense could be converted into a little tempting pudding for some poor invalid near; bones and odd bits left stewing would next day make a bowl of tasty broth. Such homely hints caused smiles on many a kind-hearted cook's face. But, oh! how their hearts responded with heavy sighs as I opened to them the histories of several of the dear young girls we had found in the missionary work in the East End of London in the past year! Then how they rejoiced as they heard of Miss Lowe's and Mrs. Merry's efforts to clothe and start out into service so many. Easy was it to read many of their hearts—they too would like to train for the service of life one of our poor young sisters.

Ere we parted we read a solemn reminder from the word of Him who became a servant of servants, washing his disciples' feet, taking 'upon him the form of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death,' a place of service being a place of honour, as the precious volume revealed from beginning to end—from Moses, the servant of God, till we follow, with the eye of faith and hope, the redeemed saint in the glory where his servants shall serve him day and night for ever. Nor were those amongst this little company forgotten who had not yet become followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. They were reminded that only one thing was needful, to at once accept the offers of a Saviour's love, and become one of the Marys who fill the whole house with the odour of her loving service.

Next morning, soon after breakfast, my lady friend had a series of visitors. The cook from the neighbouring mansion came in, bringing her kitchen box for the poor, which produced 11s. 6d. Then another, full of joy, followed with her box, which was found to contain 17s. 3d., and another with 12s. 7d.

This is a class of our sex who know little of want, and have good wages, but (as in the experience of this dear servant of the Lord) meeting together once a week to converse over a portion of his holy word whilst working for the poor and destitute, soul after soul has been won for him, and the result is such as I have here described. My whole spirit ever since has been going out in fervent desires that such classes for servants might be increased. If any dear Christian mistress has a desire to begin, gladly will I procure for her further details of this loving service from my friend.

A. MACPHERSON."

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

IN the work of evangelising the world, it is clear, as a general truth, that the religious welfare of the population nearest to each church is the care of that church. What it does not do for them nobody else can or will do; so that on it, under God, their salvation depends. The solemnity of this charge a few in each church no doubt feel, but a large portion do not.

Many indeed absolve themselves from all share in it, leaving the work to be either half-done by the pastor and a few active members, or wholly neglected. Among those who exempt themselves, are some of the aged and

infirm; mothers absorbed with family cares; the poor struggling for a livelihood; young men and maidens pursuing the enjoyments of youth; many a farmer, mechanic, merchant, and lawyer, engrossed in toils and cares; many rich families at ease in social luxury, as though the more God gave them the less he expected them to do for him; and finally, many men of learning, culture, and influence, who regard their promotion to high stations in the world as a virtual discharge, instead of an increase of responsibility and labour.

It is evident that these several classes are not *all* exempt from these labours; for if they were, few or none would be left, and these neighbours of the church must perish uncared for. The truth, on the contrary, is, that not one of them is exempt. The united influence of all the members of the church is essential to the right discharge of this obligation. The *whole church* owes it to God, to itself, and to the souls around it, unitedly to take upon it this responsibility God has imposed, and unitedly to discharge its duties—to pray for them, to counsel together how to reach and benefit them, to seek to convict them of sin, and win them to Christ. In this lively and permanent interest, in these daily and fervent prayers, in this consistent example and habitual aim to influence their neighbours for good, *every member* of the church can and ought to share.

Such a spirit in the church would change some of the greatest obstacles that hinder men's coming to Christ into almost irresistible attractions to him. The unbelief that controls the hearts of sinners has no more powerful ally than the unbelief evinced by Christians themselves in the habitual neglect of dying souls around them. Men will not believe they are lost, if we do not prove by our conduct that we believe it; and then they cannot but believe it. We need to live and labour thus also for our own good. Is it possible that He who has spread his table for us with blood-bought food from heaven, can join us at the feast with satisfaction, while so many just around us are starving, and we do not care for them? If we do not provide for those of our household, we deny the faith, and show ourselves unworthy followers of Him who would not rest in heaven itself without us. Surely it is time that the entire membership of every local church should understandingly and cordially accept the charge of the unevangelised in its outer courts, and do all that man can do for their salvation.

NEW LAW FOR IMPROVING THE HOUSES OF LABOURERS.

In the Report of the Ragged School Union for 1867 it is stated that "during the past year the demolition of houses has been going on at a fearful rate, and the poor have suffered considerably from these disturbing causes. They have been driven away and compelled to herd together in other localities, where large families have had to find all their accommodation in a single room, and that often a very small one. In the poor neighbourhoods of Whitecross Place, Kingsland, Agar Town, Somers Town, Notting Hill, Brompton, Field Lane, Shoe Lane, more than 1,500 houses have been taken down; and some

of the Ragged School buildings in these localities have disappeared, and the scholars scattered."

Unhappily, if this remark was true in 1867, it is not less a record of facts in 1868. For many small houses—or rather hovels—of Bayswater, Notting Hill, and Westminster, have recently been pulled down for railway purposes. Now these houses were always over-crowded; but as labourers must live near where they work, they have been compelled to crowd into the houses which remain, and as a result they have become nothing less than fever dens.

We are glad thus to find that the attention of Parliament was called to this crying evil last session, and that, as a result of the exertions of Mr. Torrens, M.P. for Finsbury, an Act has been passed to check this growing evil. The aim of this statute is to provide better dwellings for artisans and labourers by improving or taking down places occupied by working men which in the preamble are described as "unfit for human habitation." Numerous public improvements are being effected; and in the neighbourhood where they are being executed wretched homes for the working men present themselves.

The text of the new law makes provision for taking down or improving dwellings occupied by working men and their families which are unfit for human habitation, and for the building and maintaining of better dwellings.

Premises can now be reported by four or more householders, and officers of health are to report, and, when required, the owners are to improve the dwellings, or to demolish the same. Where expenses are incurred a charge is to be given on the property, in the shape of a mortgage and an annual sum is to be paid. Where a local authority executes the works, money may be borrowed of the Public Loan Commissioners and others, and a "charging order" made on the property.

Beneficial as this Act is in aim, we can only express our hope that neither parochial apathy nor any legal flaw will prevent its successful working.

SCHOLARS' PRIZE SCHEME FOR 1868.

The Committee of the Ragged School Union, being desirous to encourage good conduct and long-continued service in all who have passed through the Schools of the Union, have again decided on giving Prizes to young persons who have kept their situations with good character for twelve months and upwards, and coming within the following

CONDITIONS:

1. They must be over twelve and under eighteen years of age.
2. They must have attended the Ragged School giving the recommendation at least six months previously to having entered their first situation.
3. Having kept in one situation for twelve months, they are allowed to make one change, but must not be out of place for more than two weeks; in this case they are eligible for the Prize, provided they are in the second place on December 31st, 1868. Certificates of character will be required from both situations.

4. If they have not before received a Money Prize they will now be entitled to a Prize of Seven Shillings and Sixpence, as well as a Card, provided the Committee of the School recommending them will pay Two Shillings and Sixpence of this sum.

5. Those who have received a Money Prize previously, and are again recommended, will be entitled to a Prize Card, and a Book in value not exceeding Two Shillings and Sixpence.

6. They must have been regular in attendance at the Ragged or other Sunday School for the current year. This rule does not apply to female domestic servants.

7. Shoeblacks, occasional labourers, scholars partially employed, those engaged by their relatives, or earning more than Ten Shillings per week, will not be eligible for the Prizes.

8. Certificates must be furnished by the employers and school authorities, to show that these conditions have been complied with, and that good conduct has been continued to December 31st, 1868.

9. The candidate will lose the benefit that might arise from the application if the application papers be not fully and accurately filled up, duly signed, and returned to the office, 1, Exeter Hall, on or before January 5th, 1869.

The Prizes may be given in books, clothes, or otherwise, as the Committee of the School may determine; but if given in money, it should be placed to the child's account in a savings' bank, with a view to induce provident habits.

JOSEPH G. GENT, SECRETARY.

OUR UNITED EXCURSION.

FROM W. J. M.'s notice of our united excursion in the *Richmond Notes*, we make the following extracts:—

"I must beg you will permit me to give a short account of the annual treat to the children of twenty London Ragged Schools. These consisted of such Schools as the poverty of the neighbourhoods from whence they come prevents their being able to bear the expense of a trip to the country, and many friends kindly contribute the necessary funds. This year about £150 was thus raised. The 7th of August was the day fixed for the treat, and great anxiety was felt by the teachers and children for a fine day—as so much rain fell on the night of the 6th and early on the 7th; but the day was all that could be wished, the rain, so long desired, had freshened the ground, and the air in the park was most delightful and invigorating. The children, about 1,600, with 132 teachers, arrived on the green soon after ten, and headed by the band of the British Schools, kindly lent for the occasion, and also accompanied by one from Ferdinand Place Ragged School, marched through the town, each School having an appropriate banner. They came from places unknown to aristocratic ears, and indeed I believe many of the oldest inhabitants of London would be puzzled to describe or discover their 'whereabouts':—some from courts in Bethnal Green; 'The Devil's Acre,' Westminster; Kent Street; Henry Street; Dove Row; the New Cut, &c.,

all localities well known to the city missionary, the Scripture reader, and the Ragged School teacher, and swarming with a population of the lowest and most degraded character.

Much interest was evinced as the children passed through the town, and one or two parties most kindly gave money to be distributed amongst them. This was most gladly received, as the amount any of them, even the richest, brought was very small. I questioned a large number, and could find none who had more than three-halfpence. Some said 'Mother had given him a farthing,' and a large proportion shook their heads, testifying to their having *nothing* to spend, and who by their joyful countenances gladly welcomed the penny given to them.

Nothing could exceed the pleasure of the day. Lord Shaftesbury was again unfortunately unavoidably absent. More than one thousand toys were distributed, all getting something to carry home with them in remembrance of their trip to the country. It was indeed a joyful scene, and I wish that many whose hearts feel for these poor children had been present, especially our noble president, to whom the Ragged Schools owe so much, for I am sure they would have felt how beneficial such gatherings are, and how much they contribute to the pleasure of those who have indeed but little of this world's enjoyment. At a quarter before seven all the children were again in order for the return to the station, and it was a very pretty sight to see the long procession winding its way through the beautiful park. Bands playing, flags flying, and the cheers of the children, such cheers as children alone can give. The arrangements of our excellent secretaries were as usual, perfect; and I must not forget to mention that the railway companies well fulfilled their part, and that our old friend Mr. Cooper was as usual, all kindness and attention. Thus ended this happy day, to be remembered by the poor children as one of the few 'red-letter days' in their life's history."

Poet's Corner.

STEP BY STEP.

STEADILY, steadily, step by step,
Up the venturous builders go,
Carefully placing stone on stone—
Thus the loftiest temples grow.

Patiently, patiently, day by day,
The artist toils at his task away;
Touching it here, and tinting it there,
Giving it ever, with infinite care,
A line more soft, or a hue more fair;
Till, little by little, the picture grows,
With life, and beauty, and forms of grace,
That evermore in the world have place.

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Touching it here, and tinting it there,
Giving it ever, with infinite care,
A line more soft, or a hue more fair;
Till, little by little, the picture grows,
With life, and beauty, and forms of grace,
That evermore in the world have place.

Thus, with the poet, hour after hour
He listens to catch the fairy chimes
That ring in his soul. Then with magic power
He weaves their melody into rhymes,
Slowly, carefully, word by word,
Line by line, and thought by thought,
He fastens the golden tissue of song;
And thus are immortal anthems wrought.

Every wise observer knows,
Every watchful gazer sees,
Nothing grand or beautiful grows,
Save by gradual, slow degrees.
Ye who toil with a purpose high,
And fondly the great result await,
Murmur not, as the hours go by,
That the season is long, the harvest late.

Remember that brotherhood, strong and true,
Builders, and artists, and bards sublime,
Who lived in the past, and worked like you,
Worked and waited a wearisome time.
Dark, and cheerless, and long *their* night,
Yet patiently they at their task begun;
Till lo! through the clouds broke the morning light,
Which shines on the soul when success is won!

Teachers' Column.

PATIENCE WITH THE LITTLE ONES.

Be patient with the little ones.

Let neither their slow understanding nor their occasional pertness offend you, or provoke the sharp reproof. Remember the world is new to them, and they have no slight task to grasp, with their unripened intellects, the mass of facts and truths that crowd upon their attention. You are grown to maturity and strength through years of experience, and it ill becomes you to fret at the little child that fails to keep pace with your thought. Teach him patiently, as God teaches you, "Line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little and there a little." Cheer him on in this conflict of mind; in after years his ripe rich thought shall rise up and call you blessed.

Bide patiently the endless questionings of your children. Do not roughly crush the springing spirit of free inquiry with an impatient word or frown, nor attempt, on the contrary, a long and instructive reply to every slight and casual question. Seek rather to deepen their curiosity. Convert, if possible, the careless question into a profound and earnest inquiry; and aim rather to direct and aid than answer the inquiry. Let your reply send the little questioner forth, not so much proud of what he has learned, as anxious to know more. Happy you, if in giving your child the fragment of truth he asks for, you can whet his curiosity with a glimpse of the mountain of truth lying

beyond; so wilt thou send forth a philosopher, and not a silly pedant into the world.

Bear patiently the childish humours of the little ones. They are but the untutored pleadings of the young spirit for care and cultivation. Irritated into strength and hardened into habits, they will haunt the whole of life like fiends of despair, and make thy little ones curse the day they were born; but corrected kindly and patiently, they become the elements of happiness and usefulness. Passions are but fires that may either scorch us with their uncontrolled fury, or may yield us a genial and needful warmth.

Bless your little ones with a patient care of their childhood, and they will certainly consecrate the glory and grace of their manhood to your service. Sow in their hearts the seed of a perennial blessedness, its ripened fruit will afford you a perpetual joy.

Children's Gallery.

WHAT A POOR BOY DID.

In a log-cabin in Kentucky some time ago, in 1809, a little boy was born. The cabin had no floor but the ground. There was nothing to sit on but three-legged stools, and nothing to cook in but a gridiron and a kettle. You see the family were very poor; but God gave the man and woman who lived there a little boy baby, and that made them very happy. The pious mother thanked God again and again for his good gift. And what did she call his name? Abraham; I suppose after faithful Abraham in the Bible.

As this little boy grew up he had no school to go to; there were no free schools in Kentucky. He worked with his father and helped his mother, and his mother used to read him the beautiful Bible stories. If he did not learn arithmetic and geography, he learned what was far better; he learned to be a good boy, to speak the truth, to be faithful and honest and industrious and kind, and to fear God. Nor had this little boy any picture-books like you. There were only three books in the house—the Bible, the catechism, and an old spelling-book.

When he was seven years old, one of the neighbours opened a small school. Abraham went, carrying the old spelling-book under his arm. How pleased he was! This schooling, however, did not last long, for Abraham's parents did not want to live any longer in a state where men were held in bondage. So they sold their place, crossed the Ohio river, and went into Indiana. The land was covered with forests. With his axe on his shoulder and his goods in a cart, Abraham's father, Mr. Lincoln, cut his way eighteen miles through the woods, until he came to a pleasant clearing, and there he stopped to build a cabin for his little family. Abraham helped his father, and in two days the logs were put up. Of course the cracks had to be stopped with clay. There was one room below, and a little attic above, reached by a ladder. Here Abraham slept. The cabin had one door and one window; but I know it was pleasant for all that, because there were pious, loving, and thankful hearts in the little home, and God's love makes any place pleasant; not even a palace can be pleasant without it. There was enough to do daytimes to help father; but in the evening, by the bright wood-fire, the little boy studied reading and spelling, and of course made progress.

Then a great sorrow came to this little family. God took the good, faithful mother to heaven. Abraham's heart, poor boy, was almost broken. She was

buried under a little green mound near the house, and he loved to go and sit beside her grave. And his sorrow lasted so long, that his father went a long journey to find a book to comfort him. He found "Pilgrim's Progress" in the house of a neighbour twenty miles off, and he borrowed it and brought it home. Abraham was comforted. The book interested him very much, and he read it over and over again. A kind neighbour, seeing the boy so fond of books, gave him Æsop's Fables. That pleased him, and I suppose made him laugh heartily. Then he began to learn to write, and that took up his mind. He made letters with chalk and a burnt stick on boards. Sometimes he wrote on the ground. A funny writing-book, was it not?

After a time his father brought him a new mother; and she soon found out what a kind little son she had. She made him a new jacket of buckskin, and a new cap of racoon skin. A man came into the neighbourhood to keep school, and she sent Abraham to school again. He was very glad. The man had only eight scholars; and what was a great wonder, he taught them arithmetic. Abraham was his best scholar. For some reason or other, the man did not keep school long. I suppose it was not very profitable business; and so this was all the schooling Abraham ever had in his life, only about six months in all. Quite different from the boys now-a-days, who go to school year in and year out.

The next book the little fellow had was the "Life of Washington;" and how he pored over that! Little fellow, did I say? Ah, he grew up very tall, and soon got to be taller than his father. He used to cut wood and split rails, and he went down to New Orleans, 1,500 miles, in a flat-bottom boat. Here he kept a store. Wherever he went he was loved and *respected*. His word was as good as an oath. Ah yes, a great deal better. He never drank a drop of spirits. People everywhere *believed* in him. He often decided their disputes. What Abraham Lincoln said was about right, they thought.

I cannot stop to follow him all through; but, by-and-by, a gentleman in Springfield, Illinois, became acquainted with the young man, and he advised him to study law. The gentleman himself was a lawyer, and he saw that his clear head and sound heart would do well in any profession. So the young man studied law, and he walked twenty miles to get his first law book to study from.

And, step by step, he climbed up the ladder of an honourable life, until he became "President of the United States." That was the top round. He came into office in dark and difficult and dangerous times; but he took God's time, and tried to know God's will. All good men loved the very name of Abraham Lincoln. He was dear to the heart of that nation as, I suppose, since Washington, no man was ever before.

In an evil hour a young man, rich, and with many gifts which the young covet, but with an *assassin's* heart, which spoiled them all, lifted his murderous hand and shot the President dead.

He fled. But justice was at his heels. He put spurs to his horse, he crossed rivers, he fled into swamps, he hid in barns, he lived twelve days and nights of agonising fear, with justice at his heels, and then—was shot. His body was tumbled into an ignominious grave, and his name is only spoken with a shudder; while a whole nation mourning could do none too much to testify their love and sorrow over the honoured dead; and the life and memory of Abraham Lincoln, the once poor, humble boy, will henceforth be one of the richest treasures of America.

H. C. K.

Editor's Note-book.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

THE great philosopher Quetelet first formed dry figures into a science. Since that time most theories of social progress have been to a great extent based on statistics. For when properly marshalled they indicate the nature and extent of national sin, and thus speak most potently of national weal or woe. For example, the following statistics tell most strikingly of national habits and crime, and from their terrible character, they will supply every thoughtful man with matter to think about.

I.—POPULAR BEVERAGES.

In the seven years 1854-60 the foreign spirits imported and retained for consumption averaged 0·18 gallon per head per annum; in the seven years 1861-67, 0·22 gallon. The home-made spirits retained for consumption averaged 0·83 gallon per head per annum in the former period, in the latter 0·69 gallon; foreign and home-made spirits together 1·01 gallon per head in the former seven years, 0·91 gallon in the latter. The foreign wine imported and retained for consumption, 0·23 gallon in the former seven years, 0·39 gallon in the latter. The British malt-paying duty for home consumption, 1·48 bushel per head in the former period, 1·68 in the latter.

Happily against this use of spirituous liquors, may be set the increased use of the "cups which cheer, but not inebriate." Thus in the seven years 1854-60 the quantity of tea imported into the United Kingdom and retained for consumption averaged 2·45lbs. per annum per head of population; in the seven years 1861-67, 3·10lbs. per head. Coffee averaged 1·25lbs. per head per annum in the former seven years, but only 1·09lbs. in the latter; cocoa, 0·12lbs. in the former period, 0·13lbs. in the latter.

II.—BRITISH CRIME.

The number of persons committed for trial in England and Wales last year was 18,971, or 122 in excess of the number in 1866. The numbers in each of the five years 1862-6 were as follows:—In 1862, 20,001; 1863, 20,818; 1864, 19,506; 1865, 19,614; 1866, 18,849. Of the 18,971 criminal offenders committed for trial in 1867, 3,763 were *females*. The number of persons convicted last year was 14,207; the number of persons acquitted being 4,741, exclusive of 23 detained as insane.

The number of persons committed for trial in Scotland last year was 3,305—viz., 2,497 males and 808 females. In 1862 the number was 3,630; in 1863, 3,404; 1864, 3,212; 1865, 2,567; 1866, 3,003. The numbers convicted in each of the last three years were 2,360 in 1865, 2,292 in 1866, and 2,510 in 1867. The numbers returned as acquitted, exclusive of persons found and detained as insane, were 207, 260, and 277 respectively, the proportion per cent. acquitted to total commitments being only 8·4.

The criminal offenders committed for trial in Ireland last year numbered 4,561—3,665 males and 896 females, or 235 more than in 1866. The numbers for Ireland have gradually decreased from 15,144 in 1853, and 7,210 in 1857, to 6,078 in 1863, and 4,326 in 1866. Of the 4,561 criminal offenders committed for trial in 1867, 2,733 were convicted. Thus the proportion borne by the number acquitted, exclusive of persons found and detained as insane, to the total number committed for trial in Ireland, was 39·5 per cent.

The returns for the United Kingdom show that there were 26,837 criminal

offenders committed for trial in 1867—21,370 males and 5,467 females—against 26,178 in 1866—viz., 20,543 males and 5,635 females. The number convicted was 19,450, against 18,964 in 1866; and the number acquitted, exclusive of persons found and detained as insane, was 6,821 in 1867, against 6,714 in 1866.

But this catalogue of British crime will not be complete unless we add that of a higher social class than that which forms the bulk of the criminal type—we refer to those shopkeepers who defraud the poor by the use of false weights and measures. It would seem that this class of crime, which *affects the poor* more than the rich, is increasing. Nor do we believe that it will ever cease until the system of fines is abolished, and shopkeepers who are thus detected in cheating are sent to prison like any other persons guilty of theft. A parliamentary return was recently published which is not very flattering to the metropolitan shopkeeper. It is a "black list" of the number of persons in the metropolitan parishes convicted during the six months between July, 1867, and January, 1868, of practically robbing their customers—by the use of false weights and measures. The return contains a list of no less than 666 offenders of this kind, and the practice, according to this statement, seems to have been most rife in the districts of Westminster, Deptford, Lambeth, and Woolwich. On the other hand, it would seem that the Paddington, Hanover Square, and some of the suburban divisions have either enjoyed complete immunity from offences of this kind, or have not the advantage of a zealous police service for their detection. In the return for the division of Marylebone, which had thirty-four offenders, the names are entirely suppressed on the ground that many of the offenders were *not proved* to have had a fraudulent intention.

III.—Deaths from Vice.

During the first six months of the present year, 1,249 violent deaths were registered in London, including the deaths of eighty-nine persons who were killed by horses or carriages in the streets. The mortality in London by suffocation shows a decrease, the number of deaths registered in the six months being 216, against 269 in the corresponding period of 1867. About eighty-five per cent. of the deaths by suffocation are those of infants under one year of age; of the 216 deaths in 1868 only seventeen were those of adults.

The deaths from frightful enthetic disease were also chiefly those of infants; they numbered 216 in the first two quarters of 1868, against 204 in the corresponding period of 1867. Allowing for increase of population, these numbers indicate that this disease is becoming more prevalent.

Of the number of deaths which occurred in London from excessive drinking, seventy-eight were directly ascribed to alcoholism—thirty-two to intemperance, and forty-six to *delirium tremens*.

The deaths by suicide registered in the metropolis in each of the six months of 1867 and 1868 were 124 and 146—namely, by gunshot, 6 and 8; cutting, 24 and 29; poison, 24 and 24; drowning, 20 and 30; hanging, 35 and 42; suicide by other means, 15 and 13.

The deaths by poison, including both accident and suicide, have slightly decreased. But still further restrictions and precautions on the sale of poisons will probably in future reduce death by poison to a minimum.

Correspondence.

PARISH RATES ON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Dear Sir,—I am glad to be able to report to you that the Islington vestry have very kindly resolved to remove the name of the Milton Yard Ragged School from the rate-book, and thus, so far as we are concerned, to set at rest the much vexed question of *the rating of Ragged Schools*. My experience may be of use to the secretaries of other Schools; I will therefore mention my method of procedure for their guidance, should they wish to avoid the payment of what has always appeared to Ragged School men to be very unjust burdens.

I allowed the collector to call again and again until, of course, the inevitable summons was delivered; this I answered personally by appearing before the magistrate and protesting against the payment, on the ground that the School did not receive the slightest benefit from any of the charges for which rates were made. The magistrate referred the matter to the assessment committee with a note of his own on the case; lately, by appointment, I appeared before this committee and repeated my argument, that the *police rate* was no good to us, because if we wanted a constable for a special purpose, we had to pay a special (and high) fee:—that the *lighting rate* was no good because the gas lamp outside was supplied from our own meter, and, in fact, we benefited the street by *our* lamp rather than received benefit from the public lamps. That the sewers rate was useless, as we did not use the sewers, &c.

The result was that the committee most kindly exempted the school premises from rating, a course which I hope will be pursued by every vestry in London.

I am, yours &c.,

Charles Kemp.

[We gladly record this successful appeal of our friends to the parish conscience. Would it not be advisable for the Committees of other Ragged Schools, who have been thus *fined* for voluntary labour, to appeal to their own vestries, using this case as a legal precedent?—Ed.]

ASHLEY DOWN; OR, FAITH REWARDED.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—Your pages have often referred to the remarkable work carried on by George Muller, at Ashley Down, Bristol. Probably since the days of Frankè of Halle no philanthropic work has been so based on faith, and on that *direct* prayer which springs from a living faith in the power and love of our Heavenly Father. Even fitting teachers are sent in answer to prayer, for no helper is accepted at Ashley Down on any other terms. We cannot wonder, then, that the staff of this orphanage should be as eminent examples of con-

secrated service as the founder; and that many remarkable conversions amongst the orphans have gladdened the hearts of the workers. God may, and sometimes does, use mere work for his glory, but we may be quite sure that from the prayer of faith success will never be divorced.

These, and kindred thoughts, occurred as I read the thirty-fifth annual statement issued by Mr. Muller. As usual, it abounds with such striking incidents of help sent in the hour of need, that we are constrained to say "this is the finger of God." Should not the following extracts from this Report stimulate those friends of Ragged Schools who are disheartened, either by a too limited staff, or by diminishing funds, to besiege the throne of grace with *believing* prayer? For they strikingly prove that, if we ask God for right things—not in a mass, but for a *specific* gift—with that true faith which thanks him even before the answer comes—that success will follow as by a natural law. Whereas if we mix doubt with prayer, the apostle says, "Let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the law" (James i. 7).

George Muller begins his last annual statement with words not more jubilant than the facts he communicates amply warrant. Thus he says:—

"My soul does magnify the Lord, for the help which he has so graciously been pleased to grant to me during another year! Difficulties, greater than ever I had them for the previous thirty-three years, have been overcome during the past year by prayer and faith; work, which is increasing with every year more and more, has not been allowed to overwhelm me; and expenses greater than during any previous year, amounting altogether from May 27, 1867, to May 26, 1868, to £41,310 16s. 8½d., have been met, without my ever being unable to satisfy to the full *at once* all demands, though sometimes amounting to more than £3,000 at a time. We are now going on in the thirty-fifth year of this institution, proving, day by day, that the living God of the Bible is still the living God. Elijah has long since been taken up into heaven, but the God of Elijah lives; and all who truly depend upon him will find him ever ready to help them."

At the beginning of the year, about £6,000 were required to complete the sum of £58,000, the total cost of two new orphan houses, including furniture and fittings. The £6,000 were received, with £633 to spare, before the year had ended; and it is expected that two new houses will shortly be opened. These two houses will accommodate 900 children; the total number of orphans will then be no less than 2,050, the total annual cost of the whole work will be about £30,000. The sum sent him from the beginning till now is about £400,000. According to the balance-sheet, about £14,000 were received during the year in money and articles, exclusively for the orphans, besides about £7,000 for other objects of the "Scriptural Knowledge Institution" (of which the orphan work is a branch), and £5,000 for the building fund already referred to.

It is pleasing to find in a sceptical age like this, when philosophers are trying to reduce all things to mechanical laws, that there is still a God visibly at work in the world. But not only do the above facts cry shame on that science which strives to make natural laws greater than He who made them, but they equally rebuke every fainting Ragged School worker. They seem to tell the teachers of every under-manned or ill-supported School that God still

"gives liberally" to all who ask "nothing doubting." For, happily, the promise is not yet repealed, "Ask, and ye SHALL receive, that your joy may be full." And surely Christ's "shall" ought to suffice to quench all doubts, and make us feel that it is a sin in every toiler in God's vineyard if he does not walk by sight as well as by faith. Yours, &c.,

Q IN THE CORNER.

Notices of Meetings.

HOLLOWAY.

THE annual meeting of the Holloway Free and Ragged Schools, Hornsey Road, was recently held in the school-rooms, under the presidency of the Right Hon. Austin Bruce, M.P.

Mr. T. Sulman, the hon. secretary, read the report, which, after dwelling upon the present aspect of education, and expressing a hope that, whatever political measure was undertaken by the Government, it would recognise and foster institutions as free in their origin and as unfettered in their management as the Holloway Ragged Schools, stated that Schools like theirs had a peculiar fitness for the class they were intended for; and, without any self-laudation, they pointed to the fact that they had practically replied to the great difficulties that beset the educational question in theory, by supplying a sound unsectarian education to a daily average of 400 children without endowment or Government aid. The paid master and mistress had their efforts supplemented by a noble band of self-denying educated teachers, whose patience no wilfulness could tire, whose pity and sympathy ingratitude could not quench, who came from homes of comfort and culture, to be at once examples and messengers of Christian love. No less than fifty ladies and gentlemen assisted in the teaching in the Schools during the week. The Boys' School has an average attendance of 86; the number of admissions during the year being 265. The master reports a steady progress in the work, and the pleasing fact that seven of the boys received prizes from the Ragged School Union, for keeping their situations for a year with good characters. In the Girls' School the average number on the books is 135, the average attendance daily 90. The irregular attendance of the elder girls was the only drawback. The teachers would gladly welcome such a measure of compulsion as would check the caprice and indifference of parents. The Mixed School for young children, with an average daily attendance of 124, is the largest School in the institution, and the teaching has been successfully conducted. The Infant School has an average number on the books of 93, with an average daily attendance of 64. These children were described as being orderly and happy, and under the tuition of one who was brought up in the Schools. The Boys' Night School numbers forty-nine scholars, with an average attendance of thirty-eight. The Girls' Night School, with an average attendance of forty, is doing good work. The Sunday Afternoon School has an average attendance of 128, and the Sunday Evening School an average attendance of 155. In addition to these agencies, there are a Cottage Service for working people on Sunday evenings, with an average attendance of seventeen, a Mothers' Meeting, a Penny Bank, a Shoe Club, a Band of Hope, and a Library.

The expenditure was £310 14s. 5d., leaving a balance in hand of £19 10s.

PERKINS' RENTS SCHOOLS.

The annual meeting of subscribers was recently held at the school-rooms, the

Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., in the chair.

The Report stated that the Wednesday Mid-day Prayer Meeting, which has been held without interruption for the past five years, from half-past twelve to one, is well attended.

An effort to place in many hands the Word of God has been successfully carried out. A blind member of the Club has during the past year read the Holy Scriptures in upwards of 700 streets, and has disposed of above a thousand portions, and circulated a large number of the tracts.

The Sunday Schools are at present open only in the afternoon. A little additional help has been obtained lately, but as a natural consequence the attendance of children has been larger—averaging ninety—while many are still excluded. A Monthly Teachers' Prayer Meeting is held, at which many of the elder children are present. The Children's Clothing Fund is still continued—the deposits amounted during the year to £30 2s. 4d. A Lending Library has been in operation some years, this being a small effort to counteract the injurious effects of what is called the juvenile literature of the day.

During the year twenty-eight girls and thirty-six boys have gone to service, or various employments; five boys are at sea; one in the Boys' Refuge, Whitechapel; and seven are shoeblacks.

The Band of Hope continues to meet every Wednesday evening, from seven till nine o'clock. A Penny Bank is attached to this society with 178 depositors—amount paid in during the year, £55 4s. 9d., all of which has been withdrawn from time to time for clothing, &c.

The Mothers' Meeting continues to be held in the school-room every Monday evening, from seven till half-past nine. It now numbers a hundred and eleven members—mothers of the children who attend the Schools. During the year 1,093 yards of calico, 393 of flannel, 416 of print, 183 of holland, 378 of linsey, 37 of ticking for bedding, 30 pairs of sheets, 1 pair of blankets, 4 shawls, and 1 table-cloth, have been supplied to the members, fourpence in the shilling being allowed, and the needles, cotton, tape, &c., are given gratuitously. The cost of the materials has been £98 16s. 9½d., towards which the mothers have paid £76 16s. 2½d.

The Westminster Working Men's Club and Reading-room, in Old Pye Street, has now been in successful operation for seven years and a half.

In July, 1866, a dwelling-house for sixty-one families of the industrial class was finished and occupied, situate in Old Pye Street and Little St. Ann's Lane, and known as the Westminster Buildings. After two years' experience it may be said to be perfectly successful—the rooms are always full—and the rents, ranging from 1s. 9d. for a single room, to 4s. 3d. for three rooms, have been brought within the reach of those whose earnings are necessarily small and precarious. The sanitary state of the building has also been satisfactory. There has been the usual amount of childish diseases, but only one adult has died during the two years, one of which was the cholera year, so fatal in the East of London. The dwelling-house is self-supporting, the rents being sufficient to pay all expenses; but there is no margin towards paying off the mortgage.

Papers, Original and Selected.

HOMES OF THE POOR.

When we visit the by-ways of our great cities—that nest of courts and alleys which form an almost inextricable network—we are struck with the squalor and dirt which are the dominant features. When, indeed, we peep into the ill-ventilated, over-crowded rooms in which the very poor herd, we are constrained to ask, Is it possible for virtue even to live here? For it is clear that from their surroundings they suck in vice at every pore; and thus that which ought to be a sacred spot, is more like a pandemonium than a home. In such houses we find greybeards and children *hiving* in one room, which is their living and sleeping room, and not rarely also their workshop. Now, were the evils of such indiscriminate association merely physical, they would demand the severest reprobation; but the social and moral evils are still more terrible. For so long as old and young of both sexes—married and single—herd together in the same room, and often in the same bed, virtue is out of the question; and hence poor girls "fall" before they know the terrible meaning of the word.

Nor are these evils lessening, as might be expected, with that advanced civilisation of which we are so prone to boast. For so many hovels have been pulled down for railway purposes in Somers Town, Westminster, and Notting Hill, that houses always over-crowded have become still more crowded, and thus they can only be regarded as fever-breeding grounds. Even street improvements do not diminish, but rather extend these evils. Thus a large number of poor houses—nay, court after court—in Lambeth have been pulled down to make room for the southern embankment of the Thames, and the poor tenants have been scattered far and wide. So also to give space for the palatial mansions of Victoria Street, Westminster, whole courts have been so removed that their very sites cannot be traced.

These, doubtless, are all noble improvements; but still they have all been obtained by the sacrifice of the comforts of our poorer

brethren. For the other side of the question must not be forgotten, namely, that the demolitions which have gone on to so vast an extent are chiefly those of old quarters and poor houses, inhabited by the labouring population. Of course nothing can possibly be more desirable than that all such quarters should be removed. Yet the demolition of one low quarter only causes another elsewhere. We pull down one refuge of poverty, but it is compelled to find another. We drive a multitude from one low region to make other regions more crowded, and other quarters fuller. It is nothing to replace a squalid street by a street of shops or offices, or by a large public building. It is nothing to pull down whole acres of cheap and nasty lodgings, and put cleanly but dear ones in their place. What needs to be done is to provide cheap and good residences for the poor at the same time that the competition of landlords, who live upon the high profits of crowded squalor, is bought out by the compulsory purchase of their property by those who undertake by the act of purchase the obligation of its improvement. The Victorian reconstruction of London will be a great success or a splendid failure, according as it succeeds in making it a better home for the vast population around us, or as it merely renders it a more brilliant and striking metropolis.

But, as if these evils were not sufficient, the bulk of these houses, if supplied at all, are ill supplied with water. The butts are usually too small for the wants of the inmates; for in this case the great law of political economy is reversed, and the demand is greater than the supply. Never cleansed, layers of mud, stones, and decaying vegetation are found at the bottom of the water-butts; whilst on the top, and at the sides, strange fungi find a *habitat*. Thus we can scarcely wonder that they turn from the tainted fluid with disgust; and as they cannot drink such foul water, they make it an excuse for resorting to the gin-shop. For we are sorry to say that very much of the intemperance which desolates the homes of the very poor, may be justly ascribed either to the languor induced by constantly breathing impure air, or to the want of drinkable water. Such then is the strange position of the London poor, that "with water, water everywhere, there's not a drop to drink."

But as an example of the unfit dwellings of the poor of this great city, we extract from the *Christian Times* the following photograph of North Street, Stepney. The writer says:—

"As far as I could judge, there was a good supply of water, if the tenants could only have secured enough of it. But in most instances the water-butts were too small, and being uncovered, the water was coated with a surface of dust. Moreover, the butts were next to doorless, lidless, trapless waterclosets, which were so constructed that they could only be kept, not clean, but from becoming an intolerable nuisance, by pails of water being thrown down them every time they were used. In a few of the houses I visited there was a small patch of garden-ground. This, however, was a notable exception. The rule was the smallest piece of back-yard possible; and in this, fowls, rabbits, costermongers' barrows, dung-heaps, sour grains, and the abominations belonging to a bullocks'-head shop mingled together, and, in the hot sun, emitted a smell so thick and noisome, that for hours I afterwards seemed to taste the horrid flavour of the place. I asked some of the people what form their illness took whenever sickness came to them. One poor mother, who had just paid her weekly *three shillings* to a smartly-dressed landlady and her daughter, caught hold of her little girl, and pointed to the thin little face on which fever had left its marks; 'I fear the bullocks'-head shop has done that,' she whispered, and going into the back yard I had no doubt of the fact myself. I don't see why she should have been afraid to speak out. She paid enough money—more than enough for her miserable home—and I am glad to know that what she said in a whisper will be read by thousands. As I was leaving North Street one poor woman ran after me, and said with great earnestness, 'If you have anything to do with the parish, pray come back and smell this drain; it is underneath our window, and my husband has been ill for fifteen weeks.' I went back, and through the bars I saw a quantity of black, stagnant water, most offensive to the eye, but far worse to the nostrils. I may say that in every court and in every street, about North Street and Eastfield Street these open drains are to be seen. In some of the courts the holes of the drains were stopped up. One of these drains was at the corner of Catherine Street, and into it there were no less than 'seven deliverances.' In the afternoon, when the water is turned on and these 'seven deliverances' are all at work, the smell arising from this open drain is unbearable, and I was not surprised —who could be?—to hear of the ravages which cholera committed on this very spot. It seems to me a piece of inane nonsense to see the walls placarded with bills about sanatory regulations and

precautions while such a giant evil as open drains is allowed, night and day, unchecked, to do its deadly mischief."

We have, indeed, only to visit the Ragged Schools planted in the heart of the slums, to taste—we were going to say *see*—the foul air the poor habitually breathe, and we shall cease to wonder why fever and cholera alternately decimate the population. These are some of the odours we recently noticed:—*Princes Street*, Lambeth Butts.—The school-room was rank with the odours from the adjacent soap and bone-boiling factories. There was also a kind of mist arising from the smoke of the potteries which pervaded the whole district. *Amicable Row*, Kent Street.—Heaps of decaying *vegetables* mixed with ass ordure, were lying all around the school. The stench was unbearable; and the school-room windows were kept shut, with the temperature at 85°, to keep out, if possible, the abominable odour. *Lant Street*, Southwark.—The smell from the adjacent grease and candle factories was so great as almost to cause vomiting. So with *Gray's Yard*, Oxford Street. When we visited this school, the ordure from the stables outside was being carted away, and inside and outside the foul smell was beyond description. *George Street*, Lisson Grove.—The odour from the adjacent slaughter-house and fishmonger's rendered the school too unbearable to permit us to remain. Now if such was the effect *in*side the Ragged Schools, we can readily infer what it must be *out*side, especially when we remember that the poor breathe this foul air not merely for a few school hours, but day and night, month after month.

Unhappily the bulk of the model lodging-houses do very little to remedy these crying evils. They are evidently meant for artisans who, were they sober or prudent, might readily occupy a higher style of house. The rent, too, is not below the average of the heavy sum demanded for decent rooms in London. The chief benefit, then, is this: better lighted and ventilated, they are healthier; and, with a better class of fellow-lodgers, the occupants are not annoyed by idle women or drunken men.

We said that these model lodging-houses do not meet the hard necessities of those who live from hand to mouth. For example, the enormous model lodging-house in Pye Street, Westminster, declines to admit the class which can least provide for itself; namely, those costermongers and fish hawkers who abound there. These men, unlike artisans, must live near their customers, and yet they are refused admission into this building, in order appa-

rently that those who can help themselves may have benefits which we think ought to be confined to those whose earnings are too precarious to permit them to help themselves. An effort, however, in the opposite direction has been made in connection with Perkin's Rents Ragged School. It is occupied by sixty families, including above 200 persons. We need scarcely intimate that this model lodging-house is much appreciated by the costers of the district.

But this sketch of the homes of the poor would be incomplete without a reference to the noble donations given by Mr. Peabody to better house the labourers of London. The last report issued by the trustees gives a pleasing insight into the present aspect of this movement. It says that the original fund has been increased by rents and interest on unexpended capital to the extent of £20,042 6s. 4d., making the sum total at the end of December, 1867, £170,042 6s. 4d. The buildings at Spitalfields and Islington continue fully occupied, with increasing demand in anticipation of vacancies. At Shadwell, the four ranges of buildings forming Peabody Square, and containing 195 tenements, were completed and ready for occupation at the close of the year 1866 ; but owing to the depression of business and the consequent suspension of employment in that part of London, they have been somewhat slow in filling. At the commencement of the present year 175 families were resident, and the number is gradually increasing. The total population in all the buildings erected by the trustees is 1,583. The cost of land and buildings at Spitalfields was £27,215 11s. 3d., the gross rents from which for the year amounted to £1,050 11s. 8d. ; and after deducting £359 18s. 10d. for working expenses, insurance, taxes, alterations, and repairs, there remains a net return of £690 12s. 10d. At Islington the amount invested in land and buildings is £40,397 2s. 1d., and the gross rents for the year were £1,699 7s. 5d. ; deducting £699 13s. for working expenses, taxes, insurance, alterations, and repairs, there remains a net return of £999 14s. 5d. The investment in land and buildings at Shadwell is £44,972 3s. 1d., and the gross amount of rents was £1,288 13s. 5d. (the dwellings being but partially occupied) ; and after deducting £840 17s. 9d. for working expenses, insurance, taxes, alterations, improvements, and repairs, there remains a net return of £447 15s. 8d. The expenses for the past year were much increased by causes not likely to occur again, a large portion being for repairs to water-pipes seriously damaged

by frost, and for alterations and improvements suggested by experience after the completion of the buildings. The trustees, in addition to their sites at Chelsea and Bermondsey, not yet built upon, are negotiating for the purchase of another at Westminster. According to the intention of Mr. Peabody, his second donation of £100,000 will be available for the objects of the trust in July, 1869. Mr. Peabody, in placing the latter amount in the hands of the trustees, has enlarged the sphere of its usefulness, and enabled them to possess sites and to build thereon at any place accessible by railways within ten miles from the Royal Exchange.

Yet, after all, what is required are not isolated efforts—at the best, only affecting a very small circle; but some general plan whereby houses in poor districts may be inspected, and, if possible, made fit for human habitation. This, we are glad to say, can now be done by means of the Act for improving the houses of labourers, introduced by Mr. Torrens, M.P. for Finsbury. By this statute it is enacted that if four householders certify that any house is unfit for habitation, it shall be inspected by the Sanitary Inspector, and, on his report, either pulled down or improved. The local authorities may borrow money of the Public Loan Commissioners, and make the needful improvements, if the owner declines, or is too poor to do so. They can charge the amount so borrowed on the property. We trust that parish apathy will not allow this Act to become a dead letter, like too many other good laws for the welfare of our poorer brethren.

Seeing how great are the social and moral evils involved in over-crowded and ill-ventilated houses, we may well wish God speed to every movement for rendering the houses of the labouring class fit for human beings to live in. For we are quite sure that our combat with social vice and misery must be abortive, so long as what is learnt in the Ragged School is *un*-learnt at home. With over-crowded houses we have a deadly home-enemy to contend with; but in better constructed and larger spaced rooms we shall have a powerful auxiliary in confirming our lessons of cleanliness and frugality. Thus ceasing to be fever-breeding grounds, they will fitly illustrate the words of Holy Writ (Job. xxi. 9), "Their *houses* are safe from fear."

CONVERSION OF CHILDREN.

BY REV. ANDREW A. BONAR.

THERE is a practical error very common among God's people. All of them profess to believe that the Holy Spirit may convert souls at any age, and that conversion cannot be too soon; while yet they do not look for the conversion of children with the same lively faith that they manifest in expecting the Holy Spirit to change those who are of riper years. The same warm-hearted believers who labour for older souls, and are, in the case of such, satisfied with nothing but conversion without delay, do not practically so feel and act in dealing with the young. They are satisfied if the young give attention to the truth, and if they seem not unwilling to retain what they learn in their thoughts; they do not press home *the immediate, present acceptance of Christ on children*, as they would do on grown-up persons. Thus they leave their sabbath class or their family circle without alarm and without anxiety, though there be therein no symptom of real awakening and no evidence of these young souls finding the Saviour.

One reason for the difference thus made in the case of the young is, with many, the misunderstanding of certain texts of scripture—at least so we are strongly inclined to think.

1. One person quotes Prov. xxii. 6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The person with whom this text is a favourite probably applies it thus—"Only teach the plan of salvation to a child, and show wisdom's happy ways to a child, and, though at the time the child be not converted, yet, when he is old, he will no doubt take the way you have taught him." But is this the sense of the text? Very far from it. The Holy Spirit means to teach us quite another lesson by these words, viz. "Only be sure that you get the child in the way while still a child, and you need never fear in regard to that child's after-perseverance." It is "Initiate a child in the way" (see the Hebrew), or at the beginning of the way; get the truth introduced into his soul while he is a child, and rest assured that he shall go on as he has begun. It is a blessed text to encourage us to seek the *present and immediate conversion* of children.

2. Another person uses a figure, and soothes his conscience under lack of success in his class or in his family by saying, "Well, at any rate I am filling the waterpots with water (John ii. 7), so that there shall be the greater amount of wine at a future day, when at length the water is turned into wine by the Lord's miraculous power in the hour of conversion." Now this is only a figurative application of a text, and no argument at all. But, even using their own figure, how is it that they do not expect that the turning of the water into wine should be immediate? What is there in the passage to which they allude to warrant their waiting on till a distant time? Was not the water changed into wine in their water-pots in a single hour? Indeed, it seems that the change took place in the very act of filling the vessels.

3. A third person has much to say, in a doctrinal form, on the text in Phil. i. 6: "He that has begun the good work will perform it," applying

the passage to feelings, impressions, interest awakened among the young in the course of common, weekly teaching. There is no conversion in such cases; but then it is alleged, "There is real interest felt, there is impression made, and so the good work is begun, and, if begun, shall go on." We reply, There is a serious mistake here, for "the good work begun" means that *conversion* has taken place; *conversion* is the *good work* that begins the Christian life. Read the context, and see this beyond doubt or dispute. The apostle says, "He that has converted you, placing you in Christ the foundation, will not forsake you, but will carry on the building to completeness in the day of Christ's appearing." So that this text is really an argument in favour of our not being content with anything in the form of mere impression, hopeful interest, convictions. We must see conversion-work, we must see salvation work, we must see the Christian life really begun; and this applies to the case alike of old and young.

There is, however, apart from and besides all this, a secret feeling on the part of many Christians that it is not so important for them to be the means of converting children as it is to be the means of converting adults. . . . But they forget that these young souls, brought to Christ in very infancy, will be exercising an influence, year by year, all life long, in all the different stages of their growth, and at length on reaching manhood, will, by God's grace, mightily move for good their circle of society—over and above the consideration of the evils escaped, and the ill that was never done.

There is, however, a more serious misapprehension lying at the root of this undervaluing of early conversion. In reality, many godly people do look upon the conversion of children as a thing *to be stood in doubt of*. They scarcely believe that any child's conversion is so deep and genuine as is that of an adult; and yet they admit that all conversion alike is the work of the Holy Ghost, and that He does, when it pleases Him, convert children as well as adults. Still, they habitually ignore apparent conversion in children; they have a theory that children imitate old people, and that therefore these appearances are to be put down to imitation only. In dealing with such persons, we say—

(1.) There must be cases of real conversion among children, if the Word of God is to be our standard; for surely Psa. viii. 2 is written for all ages, and our Lord has commented upon it thus, in Matt. xxi. 16: "Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" Thus a little girl's reply to the question, "When should children come to Christ?" was excellent. One scholar answered, "At thirteen." Another, "At ten." Another, "At six." But her reply was, "Whenever they understand who God is."

(2.) There is a most peculiar fitness in the gospel being blessed to the conversion of children. The same Holy Spirit in all cases uses the gospel for saving souls; but, in applying it to children, He illustrates most notably two of its features, viz., its entire freeness (for what could a child give to God?) and its amazing simplicity, which is so humbling to the pride of self-righteous man. "I thank Thee, O Father, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast *revealed them unto babes*" (Luke x. 21, and as Jesus said this, "*He rejoiced in spirit*"). "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein" (Luke xviii. 17).

Nothing was done by the babes or little children whom Christ blessed but this, they let him lift them up in his arms without resistance, and received what he gave without offering him any price in return!

NOEL STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

From the *City Mission Magazine* we extract the following sketch of the Noel Street Ragged School—the work and the workers. Bounded on the south side by Bermondsey New Road, and on the north-west by the notorious Kent Street, the district, grand as are some of the names of the streets, is a reproduction of an Irish village. The city missionary, who has thrown his heart into the work, says:—

"This is a district of more than common ignorance of books. Few of the parents connected with the Ragged School district can read, and fewer still of the children. Girls and boys in abundance, at fourteen, do not know a letter, and nine out of ten of the youths would grow into men and women without being able to read a line of any book, were it not for the school. They came into the neighbourhood in that condition, and so they would leave it, did we not do our best to catch a few of them by the way.

The ignorance of the rising generation is truly lamentable. In spite of all our efforts, the girls and boys from twelve to twenty, in a general way, cannot read. Though we have a good school, the children are chiefly educated in the streets. The fathers and mothers do not care whether the children are at school or not, and hence there is no regularity in their coming to the school. When we go to speak to the parents, or, rather, to the mothers, they make every sort of excuse, and wind up by telling us they would send them if they could, but they have no clothes, no shoes, no cap, or, poor things, they are unwell.

The district has a Day School of from 130 to 180 children. They vary in age, from infancy to fourteen or fifteen years, with a paid assistant and three or four paid monitors. There is also a Sunday School, under the superintendence of the master of the Day School; connected with which there are twelve voluntary teachers. In the Sunday School there are some very good teachers. They do their work with a great deal of painstaking earnestness, and with their mind set upon doing good. There is, moreover, an Evening School, held two nights in the week, under the master of the Day School, and voluntary teachers as helpers; and, lastly, there is an Evening Class for Girls one night in the week, under two or three young ladies connected with the Mothers' Meeting. With the Day, Sunday, and Girls' Evening School the missionary is particularly connected. He is often there, trying by advice, by help, and by encouragement, to promote the progress of the good work.

We have great pleasure in seeing some progress in such as remain with us for any length of time. In the greater number of cases, the utmost we can do is to give some passing help by the way, so short is the time we have the children with us. Still, it is a help, and every year the master is able to take up a fair number of children to Exeter Hall for the prizes awarded by the Ragged School Union to young people who have been educated in Ragged Schools.

Often, in the district, I hear from the mothers some account of what the children have learned at the school. The greatest benefit such a school can expect to be is to counteract the education of the home and the streets. If it did nothing else but set up an opposition to the teaching of the home and the street, of four or five hours in a day, it would do a great work. No civilised being of the least decency but must be disgusted at the talk of the homes of these children. It is so bad that it would be impossible to give any instance of it in writing. The overcrowding, and consequent intermixture of the sexes, from infancy to age, has robbed our London of nicety of feeling, and placed man and brute on the same level. To get such children into the society of even decent people is a great thing to be done, because it is in itself a *protest* against their own mode of life. As a matter of course, all are not alike. Some of our most miserable people are decent both in language and among themselves; but, I am sorry to say, the number is very few who can be thoroughly so.

The schools, however, are not only a protest against vice, but they are nurseries of sound, positive instruction in that which is good—such instruction as is remembered in the street and at home; and those who take a lively and active interest in the children are known and remembered by them. I am constantly accosted by the children for miles from the school in some directions. The Ragged School is one of the most worthy institutions in London, and one to which society is greatly indebted.

The Mother's Meeting during the past year has gone on in a state of continued prosperity. I had two objects in getting it up. The first had respect to what I wished to do for the people, and the next to what I wished the women to do for themselves. I wished first to get the women out from their homes; next, to get them into the society of respectable people, and so to improve their ideas of cleanliness and behaviour; and, lastly, to make this meeting an introduction to our religious meetings, and to the public worship of the district.

In each of these objects we have, to a certain extent, gained the end I had in view. From the beginning of the movement towards a meeting of this kind I have taken a leading part. Mrs. Snape has taken the chief management from the first. Several other ladies have come as helpers, both with the mothers and the girls. The chief management of the girls' class is now under Mrs. Snape, but the main responsibility has been on myself. Last year about 200 women and girls altogether came to the meeting. The highest attendance at one time was about ninety-five. The attendance varied during the year from forty-five, the lowest, to ninety-five, the largest number present at once. Seven years ago, except it was a scramble for food or clothing, it was impossible to get more than a dozen people together.

There has been a great improvement in the outward appearance of the people, and of the babies the women bring with them; and this improved appearance is not because they are a better-off class of people, but because the same class are more clean and decent than when they first came. They try to have shoes, gowns, and bonnets, and to have their hands and faces washed and their hair combed. Some of them, however, still have no beds and no furniture in the room.

This change leads to another. When they become a little decent they

can be induced to go to a meeting or a place of worship, and when they get there we hope they may get some spiritual benefit and be led to Christ, and so find the way to heaven and eternal life. At the least twenty of these poor miserable people have become occasional or regular attendants at a place of worship through coming to the meeting, and some of them have become communicants at their own request.

We have for some time had a meeting on a Friday evening for the practice of singing. In this the schoolmaster is the leader, and I have from twelve to twenty there. The women and two or three girls take a great interest in this class. Young and old come, from fourteen to seventy. I think this a most important work. I believe the singing of hymns has a most important influence on the life of Christian people. I believe the Wesley Hymns have done more for the spread and maintenance of Wesleyan Methodism than the preaching. I have noticed also that hymns repeated or sung have a great influence on children. One of our best and most consistent women is a very fair hymn singer; and so, making the best use of the materials we have got, I believe the singing meeting has already done good work for us. We cannot hold the meeting every Friday evening, but we can get a meeting up in a couple of hours. Our school is occupied every night but Wednesday, and on that night we are otherwise employed. We cannot calculate the good effect of teaching our people to sing hymns as a counteracting influence to the filthy and profane conversation in which they spend their life from day to day. It purifies their minds and the atmosphere of their homes.

For a long time I had felt that we still needed something to bring out our men amongst us, and more especially our young men, and such of our women and vagabond girls as will not go to a religious meeting or to a Mothers' Meeting, and this led to the idea of a Temperance Entertainment. We begin the meeting with singing the 117th Psalm, and a short prayer, and conclude with the Doxology. The meeting is held generally once a fortnight, and the business consists of speaking on temperance, cleanliness, and domestic economy, readings of suitable pieces, and the singing of temperance songs, and other things of a moral character. The purely teetotal part of the affair is managed by the master, who has been a teetotaler between twenty and thirty years. The undertaking has been a successful one. It has brought out the people we wished to get out, and we could at any time have three hundred there, if we make no selection amongst the youthful part, but we cannot manage too many of them. As it is, we have had more than three hundred there at once this winter season. Amongst our company have been seen the worst of drunkards, the profanest swearers, the thieves and the adulterers of our neighbourhood. The men of darkness have come to the light, and mixed in decent behaviour with their more reputable neighbours; and we have to thank God for it."

WHAT A CHRISTIAN COBBLER DID.

In a part of England where the beauty and fertility of the natural scenery are sharply and painfully contrasted with the deformity and sterility of the

moral, only a few miles distant from a principal road, along which daily passes much of the gaiety and refinement, and not unfrequently also much of the benevolence and piety, of the land—there is a village which the eye of the traveller may detect as he winds up and down the sides of the neighbouring hills. It is a spot surrounded with the luxuriance of woods and orchards, interspersed with fields of unrivalled freshness, and in the neighbourhood of some of the most lovely eminences our island contains. But fair as the scene has appeared to the sense of successive generations, who have viewed, admired, and enjoyed it, there was everything among its population morally to designate it a *desert*, or something far worse than a desert. A heathen village could scarcely have presented a more appalling scene of vice and brutality than might there have been witnessed. The Sabbath was to them a day of rest from the drudgery of the world, only to seek the more degrading drudgery of sin and Satan. No Sabbath School blessed its children; no minister cared for its people; no kind ladies visited its cottages or read by the bedsides of its sick and dying poor; no passing traveller dropped a Christian tract.

In this village there was one as rude and ignorant as any of his neighbours, and as much estranged from God as any around him. He bore the distinction of the *village cobbler*. He had passed considerably the meridian of life, and was fast waning into that state in which ignorance and sin are rendered obdurate by habit, and stiff-necked by age. He had spent many a year in the toilsome duties of his vocation, and had conversed with most of the equally humble and ignorant individuals of the generation around him, but still he knew not God.

His attention was one day arrested by the intelligence that in a small neighbouring town certain persons were in the habit of privately meeting to read the Holy Scriptures, and converse together upon their contents. The fact to him was altogether singular and unheard of. After some meditation he thought he should like to be present, and he accordingly resolved to go. His resolution was soon carried into effect. He witnessed the humble seriousness of a few pious people, who met for the sole purpose of hearing the Word of God read. His attention was directed to the reading and examination of that Word for himself. He procured a Bible, and began to feel the influence of truths which had hitherto been utterly concealed from his view. The Sunday, instead of being spent at the public-house, or in pleasure-taking, or idle and wicked gossip, was now regularly devoted to this profitable employment.

Month after month he cheerfully took his accustomed Sabbath-day's journey, toiling many a mile to hear the Word of God read, and to join in prayer and praise with a very small band of persons nearly in the same rank of life with himself. At length the Word of God took deep hold upon his heart. He became a man of faith and prayer. His neighbours wondered; his family admired; and angels rejoiced. How naturally do the genuine principles of Christianity lead the heart to benevolence! He had scarcely himself become a Christian before he looked around him on his village neighbours and deeply and inwardly mourned over their wretched condition. But he not only pitied, he asked himself, *What can I do?* He could do but little. He felt unable to teach them, and unfit even to attempt it; so he

resolved what to do. He had saved a small sum of money, the fruit of many years' hard industry, economy, and diligence. This little property he devoted to the building of a small chapel for the service of the village, and he accordingly determined immediately and unassisted to prepare a humble building, such as his means would allow, in which he might occasionally hear the Word of God proclaimed to his untaught neighbours. The work was soon effected. Some Christian friends in a neighbouring town engaged to obtain the services of a godly minister.

Think how delightful were the feelings of this pious cobbler when he saw the building which his own benevolence had reared first opened as a house of prayer! It was noble, and it was lovely, perhaps beyond precedent in modern times. The emotions of this lowly cottager that day might have been envied by princes.

Many Christian friends, when they heard of this, endeavoured to convince him that it was not right for him to bear the whole burden, and offered to collect money towards assisting him in this labour of love. But the sacrifice was a luxury to his soul not to be foregone. He had consecrated his little savings to this good work of the Lord, and he was resolved to make it a monument of his gratitude to the Saviour that might live through succeeding generations. Still, however active in doing good, and glad to find his fellow Christians willing to contribute of their abundance to aid this little village church, he proposed that they should collect what they thought proper, and devote it to the purchase of a horse for the service of such ministers as they might be able to procure, and who might thereby be enabled more frequently to visit this benighted place. This was accordingly done; and this village now enjoys the regular services of a Christian minister, has its Sunday School, and various other means of religious instruction. The effect has been striking and delightful; and the humble individual who was the instrument of all this lived many years to witness and enjoy the blessed fruits of his devotedness.

BIRD FANCIERS' SUNDAY FAIR.

In our volume for 1859, p. 197, we gave a sketch of a bird fanciers' fair which is held every Lord's day morning in Bethnal Green, at the back of the London terminus of the Eastern Counties Railway. We regret to say that this abomination is not only not extinct, but that it shows no signs of dying out. If there were no other reason, this Sunday fair alone would supply adequate reasons for the large number of Ragged Schools which are at work in the immediate locality.

From the *Times* we take the following notice of this Sunday Bird Fair:—

"Every Sunday morning, about ten o'clock, a crowd of men and boys take possession of four streets within a few minutes' walk of the Great Eastern Railway Station at Shoreditch. They belong to the roughest class, and they bring with them for sale the most nondescript collection of articles. Birds are the most numerous, and from them the scene is called the Shoreditch Bird Fair. But the 'bird duffers' are only the centre of the fair. We

read of dogs, mice, anatomical ponies, broken-down perambulators, old keys, locks, and hardware, and even fiddles and concertinas. This crowd, too, like an army, brings its camp-followers—venders of pies and ginger-beer, and low betting men.

Beer and spirits cannot be openly sold, for it is Sunday, and the hour of Divine service, and the public-houses and beer-shops are shut. But the restriction is easily evaded. Holes are cut in partition walls, through which the drink is passed to the neighbouring houses. Where two streets are parallel it is easy to admit customers into the back yard through an opposite house—and, in fact, the police have found parties of men sitting in the yards of public-houses with barrels of beer by their side. The buying and selling at the fair is, of course, conducted with the usual noise, and, we are sorry to add, amid the grossest and loudest obscenity and blasphemy. And all this, as we have said, on Sunday morning between ten and one o'clock, and under the very shadow of two churches, which are so near that the shouts and curses of the fair interrupt the worship of the congregations, and the sound of the church organs is heard amid the indecencies of the crowd.

This is not a mere local malady, but the symptom of a too widespread disease. There are foul humours at large in the social body, which gather from time to time in any convenient spot. You break up the gang in one spot; they run away and may be hidden for a time, but they are sure to reappear elsewhere. The nuisance consists, in fact, in the men and boys, and even in the women, themselves; they represent the moral drainage of this great city, which you cannot pitch into the river, or transport. It lies festering about us on all sides, and we do but toss it from place to place; we pull down one rookery to supply birds for a second. We have here the moral abominations of London forced upon our attention, and even brought side by side with its most sacred and most civilising influences.

The problem, therefore, is not in the Shoreditch Bird Fair, but in the state of things which produces the Shoreditch Bird Fair. The question is not merely how to drive away these unhappy people from St. Matthias and Holy Trinity districts, but how to prevent the existence of such people, or, at least, how to improve them now that they exist. It is an intolerable scandal that men and women should be found within a stone's throw of our churches so utterly lost to all sense, not merely of religion, but of decency and humanity. The most distressing feature in such a scene is the absence of all reasonable motives or feelings in the crowd. They are predatory animals herding together for the purpose of their prey, and none of the impulses or thoughts that stir the classes above or around them find the least answer in their nature. They now hold a bird fair within sound of a church organ; they would just as soon hold it within the church itself, or, indeed, within Westminster Hall or St. James's Palace. There is nothing in their world but birds and dogs and prizefighters; and the only refinements of their language are curses and obscenities.

How is it that such people exist in a country which boasts of being Christian, which has an Established Church, with clergy who are responsible for every soul in every parish, which sends missions to the heathen, which, as this very locality witnesses, recognises missionary work at home, and is now busily engaged in establishing 'mission districts,' and missionary clergy,

and all sorts of lay agency? One would have thought it inconceivable that where there is such ostentatious husbandry, there should be soil which bears no trace whatever of any good seed having been dropped into it, but, on the contrary, is rank with the foulest tares.

We are much afraid that if the whole history of such a scene could be sifted, we should come upon sheer neglect of some sort or other; and though we do not wish to pass a hard judgment on men who have a very hard task, we think many might take warning against the least neglect of their duties. But there is one form of neglect, rife at the present time, to which such a spectacle is an overwhelming rebuke. In the face of such a fact as this, what can we think of all the metaphysical quibbles, and the vestment squabbles, and the gratuitous innovations, which are now distracting the attention of half our clergy, and which they think, and are sometimes encouraged to think, the great questions of the day? It is worse than Nero fiddling while Rome was burning. While they are compassing sea and land to make one proselyte to lighted candles, there are thousands of people around them ignorant of the very alphabet of morality and reason. While a gross pollution is spreading under the cognizance of their very senses, they must needs spend their own energies and waste the energies of others upon embroidered dresses, and incense, and hymns to the Virgin Mary, and associations for promoting the unity of Christendom.

This spectacle is proof how gigantic a work lies before the clergy, and it is grievous that their exertions should be for a moment diverted by these trumpery controversies. They are perpetually devising new machinery, re-arranging buildings, inventing new agencies, and, in short, making endless preparations to evangelise the people, but failing to throw their whole energies into the actual task. The work that is necessary among such people as hold the Bird Fair in Shoreditch can be done equally well by any machinery or by no machinery. Earnest men, with their hearts in their work, have done wonders in such scenes with no other instrument than the Bible in their hands. Yet the Bird Fair and the people who compose it offer a terrible reality, utterly beyond dispute or exaggeration. We know that no time and no labour can be misemployed there. When will people be more concerned with the certain good, and the certain evil, which lie before their feet, than with the speculations and the vain ambitions which are so pleasing to the fancy just because they are so wholly unreal?"

Poet's Corner.

ANYWHERE AND ANYHOW.

If you cannot on the ocean
Sail among the swiftest fleet,
Rocking on the highest billows,
Laughing at the storms you meet,

You can stand among the sailors
  Anchored yet within the bay;
You can lend a hand to help them,
  As they launch their boat away.

If you are too weak to journey
  Up the mountain steep and high,
You can stand within the valley
  While the multitudes go by;
You can chant in happy measure,
  As they slowly pass along;
Though they may forget the singer,
  They will not forget the song.

If you have not gold and silver
  Ever ready to command;
If you cannot t'ward the needy
  Reach an ever-open hand;
You can visit the afflicted,
  O'er the erring you can weep;
You can be a true disciple,
  Sitting at the Saviour's feet.

If you cannot in the harvest
  Garner up the richest sheaves,
Many a grain both ripe and golden
  Will the careless reapers leave;
Go and glean among the briers
  Growing rank against the wall,
For it may be that their shadow
  Hides the heaviest wheat of all.

If you cannot in the conflict
  Prove yourself a soldier true;
If, where fire and smoke are thickest,
  There's no work for you to do;
When the battle-field is silent,
  You can go with careful tread,
You can bear away the wounded,
  You can cover up the dead.

Do not, then, stand idly waiting
  For some greater work to do;
Oh, improve each passing moment,
  For these moments may be few!
Go and toil in any vineyard,
  Do not fear to do or dare;
If you want a field of labour,
  You can find it anywhere.

There's a field already open,
  You can lend a helping hand,
To reclaim the many drunkards
  Wide extended o'er the land;

You can help us try to banish,
From their lips the fatal bowl,
You may gain a crown of glory
If you save a human soul.

Teachers' Column.

A MEETING of the Masters and Mistresses of Ragged Schools was held in Field Lane School on Wednesday, November the 14th. After tea, Mr. T. Brooker took the chair.

Mr. Curtis introduced the following subject:—

OUR NIGHT SCHOOLS.

He said—1st. THE CLASS.—There are many yet roaming the streets who should be in the Night Schools. How are they to be got hold of? Among other methods, by visiting the Sunday Evening Schools where many of them attend; by personal invitation when met in the street; by the distribution of small handbills giving the name and place of school, and time of meeting; by giving a tea or an entertainment expressly to boys or girls going nowhere. And, for a time, these entertainments to this class should be periodic. The teachers and friends being thus brought face to face with these outcasts, a bond of sympathy would be established between them.

2nd. Having got the boys and girls, how are they to be retained? To this end, they must be controlled and interested. For mere vanity sake, the school must not be filled with a noisy mob. Neither should the numbers, from indolence and indifference, dwindle into insignificance. Thirty should be considered the minimum. In order to interest the school, there must be life and variety in the work; the addresses should be anecdotal, and occasionally the ordinary routine should be broken by the surprise of an evening of music, or tales of wonder, &c.

3rd. The time of meeting should be so arranged as to meet the circumstances of the neighbourhood; or if there be nothing special in those circumstances, the time should be fixed to meet the convenience of voluntary helpers.

4th. No disarrangement should occur either as regards the evenings or time of meeting; unpunctuality and irregularity work irreparable mischief.

5th. The attendance, if possible, should be registered; the regular and well-behaved should be rewarded. If it be not possible to give books or clothing, some little meeting or entertainment might be provided specially for them.

6th. If the attendance of younger children who attend Day School cannot be avoided, they should have no share of the ordinary instruction, and be so placed as not to interfere with the work of the school.

7th. It is most desirable to have the bulk of the scholars present at the time of commencement. Some teachers have secured this by being present half an hour before time, and permitting the play of some simple games.

8th. The teacher should have a time-table. It is not well to have all the school occupied on the same thing. Writing and arithmetic should be regarded as subordinate to reading. The reading should be for the most part simultaneous. The writing should not be mere mechanical copying: small words should be dictated, and script copies used as aids. By the more advanced the reading lessons may be written out, inspection should be made, and the words incorrectly spelled written on the black

board. The sums also should be set on the black board, or dictated, as a means to the teaching of notation.

9th. The teacher should not only superintend, but teach. And as the arrangements for the evening require time for preparation, he will feel the propriety of being at the school one quarter of an hour before the time of opening.

10th. The teacher should, if possible, allow of no interruption to his work, by persons calling in the ordinary [school time. I would suggest some easy home lessons for the very backward, and nothing could be better for this purpose than the book of Mr. Matthews. As the lessons are short they might be printed on the black board, and gone through as a preparation for their conning them at home. The books may be sold.

In conclusion, let teachers and committees never cease in their endeavours to obtain voluntary aid. The work cannot be effective, except in rare instances, without it. This suggestion applies only to those cases where a *paid* teacher conducts the Night Schools. Moreover, let me beg of the ladies or gentlemen who give their voluntary aid, not to supersede the master or mistress, but aid them in every possible way in their arduous work, and on all occasions sustain their authority.

After a hymn had been sung, Mr. Hytche spoke on the following topic—

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

He said that Ragged School teachers were as much missionaries as those to India, or to the Jews. The only distinction was that one were missionaries to adults, and the other to the young. Hence, however much they had to teach the secular elements, their chief object was to train youth for God. If, then, they failed in this, their work was a failure.

The religious education of Ragged Schools was conducted by four means:—

I. Prayer.—This need not always be at the beginning of school, but sometimes in the middle, so as to catch those elder scholars who cannot come earlier. As regards Night Schools, the prayer had better be at the close, as the scholars of necessity come at all hours. When prayer is almost impossible through disorderly conduct, the Doxology and Benediction would be sufficient to show the religious character of the school.

Prayers in Ragged Schools should not be *speeches*. They should be simple in sentiment and words; such as a child would use, and to which he can truly say "Amen."

Such prayers should be short, so as not to weary. They should be to the point, and not ramble about all sorts of subjects of which a child cannot be expected to care anything.

In cases of bad behaved children, it would be advisable to pray with them alone at the close of school. This had often subdued the most stubborn. In the case, too, of those who were anxious about their souls, the teacher should pray with them alone.

II. Bible Reading and Lessons.—The chief topic should be the life and work of Christ. Matthew is the best book to select, as the plainest, and containing most incidents in the life of Jesus. Some teachers are fond of the Gospel by John, especially the narrative of Nicodemus. Now, though this book is most precious to ripe Christians, it is beyond the capacity of a child.

Every portion should be thoroughly explained. Thus, when reading about the woman of Samaria, the children will better understand the meaning of Christ's reference to the water of life as the "gift of God," if they are told that the water-sellers of the East use that phrase when carrying about their leathern bottles on their shoulders.

Two great doctrinal mistakes ought to be specially guarded against. First, that Christ came to pacify the Father, whereas he came because the Father sent him to show that he was already pacified. Second, be careful to let the children know that, not keeping the ten commandments, nor even prayer, can save; but that the *blood* of Christ is the only key to heaven. Then we should no longer hear

so many children, when asked "How can we be saved?" answer, "By prayer."

III. DAILY TEXTS.—Most Ragged School teachers teach a text daily. It is best to teach a different text on the first four days of the week, and for the four to be repeated on Friday. These texts should be short. There is no need to teach whole chapters or long psalms.

Their meaning should always be asked. Many children can repeat twenty texts, who do not understand the meaning of one. What is wanted, is not the memory of many texts, but that their meaning should be known, so that the heart may be affected.

IV. HYMNS.—Much of religious education is dependent upon the hymns sung in school. They should be declarative of gospel doctrine, rather than experimental. Too many of our scholars sing the chorus, "I *do* believe that Jesus died for me," who have not given their hearts to Christ, and so tell an untruth. They should then only be taught to sing what they really feel.

The tunes selected should be in a lively key. Not such as send people to sleep, but such, for example, as cause even adults to beat time with their feet or hands.

In conclusion, if Ragged School teachers are missionaries, it is clear that unconverted teachers are out of their place. For of what use is it for a teacher to tell of a great doctor who can cure diseases if they themselves are uncured? But when they have tasted the grace of Christ, they speak because they know. Thus, speaking as ministers to the young—for Ragged School teachers are nothing less—we may expect, through the power of the Holy Spirit, that their scholars will become their "crown of joy and rejoicing" in the day of the Lord.

The following friends discussed the questions in an earnest spirit. Dr. Cross and Mr. Gent, of the Ragged School Union; and Messrs. Radford, Clark, Tivendale, Dowson, Hardy, Mark, Harvey, Davis, Cousins, Hughes, Stiff, Lett, Newton, Round, and Oakley, and Miss Pettiver.

Editor's Note-book.

KEEPING THE LAMBS FROM JESUS.

ARE we sufficiently personal in our appeals to the young? Do we *individualise* them in the matter of self-consecration? Do we follow up the impression, which we see at times produced, by immediate *private conversation!* Do we employ "the grace of *letter writing*," as it has been termed, so frequently or so powerfully as we might? Do we encourage the growth of youthful piety? Is it not a fact that often when we see the evidence of religion in a child we discourage its expression and its growth? As if years were one of the Scripture evidences of grace.

The little daughter of a minister, her heart longing for a place at the Lord's table, went to her father, after having been several times postponed by him and the church, asking, "Father, when shall I be old enough to be a Christian?" He, and his church, alas! did not believe that "of such is the kingdom of heaven." But had this dear child gone to Jesus, she would most certainly have gotten a different answer.

The religious *experience* of children is, of course, small; but what is the use of a fold, if the lambs are to be kept outside till it is seen whether they can stand the weather? Treated as if their piety was impossible, how can it become a fact? Oh, if they had been wisely and skilfully encouraged, assisted, and led along the heavenly path, how would our hearts have

been gladdened, and how much more frequently would the angels in heaven have to rejoice! We have ourselves chiefly to blame for the want of success over which we mourn.

DESERTERS.

In the spiritual army there are deserters. They shun active service. The uniform of the Captain of Salvation they still wear; the sword is yet at their side; their oath is by no means forgotten. Nevertheless, they are absent from the ranks of those who are bravely fighting against the world's unbelief, carelessness, and sin. Once they did otherwise. There was a time when they zealously laboured for man's salvation, but now a sad change has taken place. Why? Most likely because of discouragement. They did not see the fruit of their efforts as soon as they expected. The harvest was not forthcoming when they anticipated it. Therefore they gradually abandoned their course of usefulness.

It may be that the reader belongs to the number of these. If so, take friendly advice. Be a deserter no more. Go back to your old quarters in the gospel camp. Take your place again in the ranks of your comrades in arms. You have forsaken your sphere of toil because you failed. Have you? Mind how you judge. Do not reason too hastily. Remember this, that success is not to be measured by sight. Certainly not. "*After many days*," is the promise of God. He never tells us that our endeavours shall always be crowned with immediate prosperity. For we are to work in faith.

And we have ample reason for so doing. Proof, enough and to spare, is there, that, though hidden for a time, wise and vigorous effort shall be crowned with heavenly blessing. Just think of the following cases. When the Countess of Huntingdon was a girl she was taught these words: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever." Probably the one who instructed her had ere long forgotten all about it. "*After many days*," when surrounded by the fascinations of a gay life, the sentence led to her religious decision. John Wesley was once attacked by a highwayman, who demanded and obtained his money. Before he left him, the good Methodist cried, "One word to you. The time may come when you may repent this course of life. Remember this, the Blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin." "*After many days*"—years subsequently—as Wesley was leaving a church in which he had been preaching, this very man accosted him, told him that the verse quoted had been the means of his conversion. Dr. Coke, an earnest minister of the gospel, whilst travelling in America, narrowly escaped drowning. A lady and her family hospitably entertained him for a time. At the close of his unexpected visit, he gave her a tract. "*After many days*"—five years afterwards—he found that the means which he thus used for doing good had been blessed to the salvation of several persons.

What rebukes of our unbelief! Let us be faithless no more. Hie you again, my friend, to your sphere of labour. Sow the seed, and the crop will surely come after many days.

Our Library Table.

Hymns and Sacred Poems. London: Bennett.

The public is almost inundated with selections of hymns. Happily most of these are orthodox in sentiment, and so are calculated to promote the divine life. But some are either tainted by the Roman malaria, or only tend to promote

a Christless Christianity. We are glad then, to find that the above selection has the true ring throughout. For, though the authors are of various schools of religious thought—ranging as they do from Herbert and Keble to Montgomery and Bonar—yet they all find their centre in Jesus. Thus this collection fully shows the oneness of all true Christians. For, however diverse they may be in dogma or in discipline, when the name of Christ is pronounced all their differences are forgotten. Thus they meet on the same platform on earth on which they will stand in heaven.

Origin of the Homes. By A. W. Ireton. London: Morgan and Chase.

THIS is a brief memoir of Mrs. Thomas, who was for twenty years actively engaged in the work of female reclamation. We met her eighteen years ago as matron of one of Captain Blackmore's "Moonlight Mission" Homes—so named because the objects were sought in the streets by night. Formed on the novel principle that these misguided women needed a home rather than a penitentiary, the experiment was a daring one, and required much prudence to carry the project to a successful issue. Probably no one was more fitted to initiate the plan than Mrs. Thomas; and the influence she thus exerted on this wayward class was very great. The extracts from her diary reveal the secret of her success; showing as they do that the work was undertaken as a work for Christ, and thus it was ever bathed in tears and prayer. It seems to say to every female worker for Jesus, let your labour be a work of faith, and then success will track your mission like its very shadow.

Correspondence.

THE LATE MR. C. ALDERTON.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

DEAR SIR,—The Lamb and Flag Ragged School has sustained a great loss through the death of its beloved treasurer Mr. Charles Alderton, who fell asleep in Jesus on the 28th of September last. He was laid in his resting-place in Highgate Cemetery on Saturday, the 3rd October, when the president, the Rev. R. Maguire, Vicar of St. James's, Clerkenwell, read the last service over his remains. Though the day was stormy, many sorrowing friends and fellow teachers were present.

Mr. Alderton was the valued treasurer of these Schools for upwards of four years. During that period he worked earnestly for the Master he professed to serve in the vineyard, until laid aside by sickness, and even then his heart delighted in the work, as he often made inquiry after the poor little ones who attended these Schools, and took great interest in its various works, which are increasing year by year.

Let us also, like our friend, endeavour to follow in the Saviour's footsteps, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and preaching the gospel to the poor. As our "time is short," let us work steadily until the Saviour summons us to be with him.

Yours faithfully,

A TEACHER.

OUR ELDER LADS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—How to keep our elder lads under our influence is the problem of Ragged Schools. The infants, boys, girls, and young women, can be all kept together, but the young men "will not come." They feel themselves to be beyond the School; and most teachers feel that THEY are beyond them.

For years they have been taught in the School; we have watched them grow up into incipient manhood, and now, just when *we think* we ought to be rejoicing in the result of our labours, we see them leave the School to become the terror of the neighbourhood, a curse to themselves, and (as superficial observers would think) a proof of the failure of the Ragged School teaching.

We are, alas! too apt to take the same view. The police statistics tell us that the dangerous classes are those with "no occupation," and "labourers," and of an age varying from fifteen to twenty-five. Many of these we know are our old scholars. What is to be done?

Generally we make one of two mistakes—either to treat them as boys, or else as men—knowing at the same time that they are neither the one nor the other. They are fast emerging from boyhood to manhood: could you desire better opportunity of speaking to them a word that may be the means of shaping their course for the future? Why, if we give it a moment's consideration, we must confess that *now* is the very time to draw out into practical life the principles we have been so laboriously instilling into their minds.

Let me suppose a case: an apprentice has been taught the theory of his trade. He knows the names of his tools, and (theoretically) their uses. But do you leave him there? Certainly not; it is now he especially needs a guide. And a good tutor shows him how, by the proper use of his tools, blunders may be avoided. He has the knowledge, but lacks the judgment. Just so with our lads. Years have been spent in theory, in instruction—now comes education, or the right use of what he knows. The very fact that they remember the lessons they early learnt, though now they be used only to point an oath or help a jest, is proof that our labour has not been lost. My proposition is, then, that they have the knowledge, but do not know the right use of it. Well, you say, all this, though true, is not new; we acknowledge the evil, but where is the remedy? How are we to keep them or get them under our influence? Let facts answer the question.

Some years ago it was pressed upon me that these lads were to be had and influenced, and that the only true and lasting influence must be God's blessing upon the teaching of the message of salvation by Christ Jesus. The result confirms the fact. I went into our streets and lanes: here at the corner of a street, or outside a beershop, stood a group of "our lads," smoking, swearing, larking. Thinking of this and of their homes, I felt that the Sunday's teaching was undone by a week's counter-training. These are lads without an idea—vacant minds ready for any impression, or for any amusement, good or bad: the only chance they had—the only influence at hand—was *bad*. Now let me try the good. "Now, my lads, you have nothing

to do; come over into the school and I'll tell you a yarn!" In they came. And thus began a Bible Class. Before long they were known and jeeringly called "Mr. T——'s lambs." Their "Judge and Jury Club," for they had one when I first found them, was thrown aside, and a prayer-meeting (unknown to myself and quite spontaneous) was commenced and kept up in one of their houses.

Two evenings in each week I meet them for Bible study, singing, and prayer. Of those who first joined some are dead. One, of whose serious illness I had not heard, sent me this message on his death bed: "Tell Mr. T—— I died at the foot of the cross." Some write from distant lands, and call me "Dear Friend." Some are soldiers, and others sailors. Now I have a class averaging in attendance from ten to fourteen, and their ages range from fifteen to twenty-five. Yours, &c.,

Limehouse. B. T.

Notices of Meetings.

MILTON YARD.

THE annual meeting of this School was recently held. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided.

The Report stated that, with the premises at their disposal, the Committee have to repeat the now "oft-told tale" of increased and ever-increasing numbers, of the School literally crammed night after night, and the sad necessity that has obliged the master to refuse admission to large numbers anxious to put themselves under instruction. During the year the Boys' Week Night School has been opened as usual four evenings per week; the average winter attendance was about 120 per evening, and the summer from 90 to 100. The lads are of various ages, from ten to twenty years, and composed almost entirely of the class for whom Night Ragged Schools were established, viz., those who are at work during the day. During the year many of the lads have been assisted in obtaining employment. Thus thirteen have been admitted to the various Shoeblack Brigades, eighteen have been sent into the Royal Navy, twelve of the homeless ones have been placed in Refuges, one has been admitted to the Cripples' Home, and twenty-three have been placed in different situations; making a total of sixty-seven provided for in various ways. The Girls' School continues to be a great success. During the year nine girls and thirty-two boys earned the prizes offered by the Ragged School Union. The reports given by the employers of these girls and boys are most satisfactory. During the winter the girls and boys had on several occasions excellent dinners at the Poor Children's Dinner Table, and during November and December, about 120 girls and boys had given to them every week a pint of soup and a loaf of bread. Thus, by little and little, the poor are made to see that in their want and distress they are not left altogether alone, and that they have only to ask, and their cases receive the attention of those best calculated to judge of their genuineness, and most able to procure for them the necessary assistance.

Of the state of the finances it is only necessary to say that the Schools do not receive that share of public and local support their object and efforts deserve. The Committee feel that they ought not to be obliged, year by year, to beg for the few pounds required for this most useful work. The treasurer's statement showed the receipts to be £121 7s. 10d., and the expenditure £116 2s. 4d.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. W. Cadman, and Messrs. J. Payne, W. Paton, Harvey, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

On October 6, the new Ragged Schools, which have been established mainly by the exertions of the Rev. H. Postance in Holy Trinity District, Toxteth Park, were formally opened by Mr. S. R. Graves, M.P. The proceedings began at ten a.m. with a short service in Holy Trinity Church, whence a procession of the School children was formed to the new Schools.

Mr. Graves said:—The interesting if not solemn service which we have just concluded consecrates for ever to the use of the children of the poorest of the poor in this district not only a School in the rudest and simplest adaptation of the term, but that which will be a daily shelter, where every kindness will be shown that is likely to raise these poor children from the state of degradation and destitution in which unhappily too many of them are now placed, to become useful members of society, and to become responsible and accountable beings—to teach them, in fact, how to live in this world, to tell them of a better one that lies beyond it, and to show them the road to that world. It is estimated by those who have given attention to educational statistics in this town, that we have living in our midst at least 20,000 children uncared for, if not deserted—fatherless to a very large extent, many of them motherless, some deserted by parents indifferent to the duties they owe to their offspring—but from one cause or another we have 20,000 or more of these children existing, for I won't call it living, amongst us as best they can. Entirely ignorant of their duty, they are growing up to manhood with all the associations of vice which unhappily too many of them inherit, and it is one of the strongest significations of the age that the responsibilities resting upon those who have the power to snatch them from their lot are becoming strong and powerful, so that they may be assisted and relieved. I am aware that Liverpool, perhaps, is a peculiar example, partly from the fluctuating nature of its population and partly from the great want of juvenile employment. But what we have in Liverpool, possibly exaggerated, exists throughout the length and breadth of this land. That such a state of things should be permitted to exist in a Christian land is matter for reflection and for inquiry. It cannot arise from any present indifference to the wants of the poor, because the voluntary efforts made by this country are sufficient to refute that idea. I fear that we are suffering for past neglect, and that though the contrast between the wealth and luxury on the one hand in this town, and the poverty and destitution which exists on the other hand, is still strong and great, I am happy to think that the gap is becoming narrower, and that each year brings us to a stronger sympathy, draws us nearer to the class below us, and makes us more earnest in our endeavours to draw that class up, so that I trust in time we shall entirely remove that which I believe to be one of the greatest blots that exists upon the fair fame of this country. There are signs unmistakeable that this state of things will not be much longer suffered to exist. The minds of thoughtful men in this town and throughout the country are now occupied with the best means of abating, if not dispelling entirely, the masses of ignorance which surround us. There is no doubt that the tide of vice and crime is increasing, and that it is necessary to stem it in order that it may be rolled back, and foremost amongst the means of effecting that object we must unhesitatingly place the Ragged School. It had been an experiment. It is now a success. It has not done all we want, nor is it capable of doing all we want. But I believe that it has been the means of saving thousands of these people and teaching them how to live. These institutions are deserving of the very highest encouragement, and I am delighted to find that this large district, in which the poor so largely abound, will in the future be blessed with such an institution as this.

Papers, Original and Selected.

SPIRITUAL RESULTS OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

At a recent conference of the paid teachers of Ragged Schools it was laid down as a foundation-principle that our teachers are nothing less than missionaries to the wild tribes of our great cities. From this the inference was deduced that no one is fit for that work who is not the subject of personal religion. Nor was either the principle or the deduction unsound. For all who know anything about the homes or the habits of our poorer brethren can have no hesitation in declaring that, unless they learn true religion in its two-fold phase—duty to man based on duty to God—in the Ragged School, they will never learn even its rudiments at home. We are glad then to know that the bulk of our teachers, paid or voluntary, are true Evangelists, and as communicants in the various brigades of the One Church, have testified their loyalty to Jesus at the Supper of the Lord.

The fact that secular training must occupy a large portion of time in our Day and Night Schools, does not militate against this missionary character of Ragged Schools. For it is obvious that unless boys learn to read and write, the labour market will be closed to their engagement. And unless girls are taught habits of industry, what mistress would engage them? Yet still we trust that, in the future, as in the past, the secular will never be permitted to over-shadow the spiritual; for should that event ever occur, from that day the downfall of this movement would be dated. But we do not anticipate such a catastrophe; for there are few of our teachers who are not evidently anointed by the Holy Spirit to "preach the Gospel to the poor.

But it is often asked, if Ragged Schools are nurseries for Christ, are there any *known* results of this mission. Nor is the question unwarranted. For, as Ragged Schools have been at work in den and hovel for the past twenty-five years, we may reasonably expect to find that some fruit has sprung from Gospel-seed so thickly planted. This inference we base on the uncancelled promise, "whatsoever a man soweth *that* shall he also reap."

The large breadth of ground we occupy in London alone tells how widely our influence extends amongst the destitute classes. Thus at the last annual meeting of the Central Society, it was reported that above 46,000 children are on the registers of our Day and Night Schools. In addition to this, 3,337 mothers are gathered weekly in Mothers' Meetings, who are earnestly invited to give their hearts unto Jesus, and then, as a visible fruit of conversion, to "show piety at home." So in our Ragged Churches, no less than 6,305 of the poorest of the poor, or the vilest of the vile, meet statedly to hear the grand old truth that no one is too bad for the blood of Christ to cleanse. In the oldest of these Ragged Churches, that held at the Field Lane School, nearly 1,200 were thus gathered every Lord's day morning during the past two months; some were, doubtless, induced to attend for the sake of the piece of bread given to the starving at the close of the service, but not a few came because they hungered for the "bread of life." Nor thus "hungering and thirsting after righteousness," were they sent empty away.

Such are some of the machinery employed, and the vast population gathered into the London Ragged Schools. The "dry bones" are there, an "exceeding great army," but what is still needed is that the Spirit may come down with such convicting and converting power that they may live. But let it never be forgotten, that though the Holy One can alone give true repentance, yet it is equally certain that, if Jonah does not preach to Nineveh, the judgments on that guilty city cannot be averted. For whether they be Jew or Gentile (Rom. x. 14.), we may well ask, "how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

But now for the harvest? For, happily, the Spirit has so breathed, both on our scholars, and the "poor of the flock," that dead souls have sprung into vigorous life. Thus at this time no less than 186 former scholars are teachers in the very schools where they first learnt the truth that there is no soul-rest out of Jesus. These are usually rated as first class teachers, displaying as they do remarkable power in disciplining and interesting their classes, more especially in taming those unbroken members, who seem to be tenanted by seven devils. Their earnestness, deep sympathy, and *directness*, are as much beyond all praise, as they are beyond all rivalry. Knowing the special sins, and the special temptations of the ragged class, from memories burnt into their

very souls, it is not wonderful that they teach like elder brothers, and so find an entrance into the hearts of the vilest. May the Lord anoint many more such teachers who speak not from mere *hearsay* but because they *know!*

Then, again, 46 London Ragged Schools recently reported that 186 scholars have professed their faith in Jesus at his table. If the same proportion holds good as respects the remaining 146 Ragged Schools, the present number of communicants would be about 800. But when we remember how our scholars are scattered far and wide—some in the backwoods of America, and others tending the sheep-farms of Australia—we may infer that not a tithe of the spiritual fruits of Ragged Schools are known by the earnest workers; and, in fact, never will be known before the blessed time when sower and reaper shall rejoice together.

We have implied that the *hidden* would probably prove to be the richest fruit of Ragged Schools. Two cases of *after-fruits* which recently came under our notice, confirm this opinion; and as they both occurred in connection with one School only we may infer that our present knowledge of spiritual results as respects the bulk of Ragged Schools is very meagre. A friend called at the London Hospital to see a patient. When he was about to leave the ward, a patient who was unknown to him called him by name. She told him that she came one Sunday morning to the Ragged School where he taught, and that the hymn "There is a fountain filled with blood" had led her to give her heart there and then to Jesus; and, though her case was hopeless, she was rejoicing in Christ's finished work, and the nurse stated that she was a true missionary to the other patients. Another case is still more striking.

One, who when in the same Ragged School was known as the worst of the worst, took a return ticket from beyond Chicago to tell us that he and five others belonging to that Ragged School had given their hearts to Jesus, and that they met every Sunday afternoon to talk about and pray for the old School.

Similar fruitage has been gathered in Mothers' Meetings. Thus above 200 are known as members of various orthodox churches. Some of these it is our privilege to know. For that thorough piety which is unmarred by the fashionable religion so much in vogue in these last days, and that every-day religion which speaks more by life than by lip, they are models which it would be well for the church at large to copy. Not a few indeed are as God's

lights in those dreary courts where poverty compels them to live. One prominent feature is the earnestness they display in inducing others to attend the place where they first tasted the water of life. Nor can we omit to notice how tenderly they attend the sick or dying beds of neighbours, repeating texts of Scripture, if haply they may lead them to Jesus, or singing the songs of Zion to soothe their dying agony.

We need scarcely say that very many of these Ragged School converts have arrived safely at their Father's house. Thus many dying children displayed that simple faith which makes child-religion so beautiful; and all enjoyed the conscious presence of Jesus. Not a few indeed preached their first and last sermon to their parents on their dying bed, some of whom were thereby led to give their hearts to Jesus. So with the dying adult. Unlike the fashionable religionist, they "knew in whom they believed," and thus had no doubt of their salvation through the blood of the cross. No wonder then that so many entered the eternal world with the word "Hallelujah" only half uttered.

But this sketch of some of the spiritual results of Ragged Schools would be incomplete did we not glance at a reflex influence of those Schools. Thus not only have many zealous teachers been called out as evangelists to our social Pariahs, either as Open-air or Ragged Church preachers, but many have been added to the ranks of the ministry. Thus we have a list before us of above forty ministers who first learnt their call to "feed the flock of God" through the unction which accompanied their addresses in the Ragged School. One Ragged School alone furnished no less than seven ministers to the Established Church, who were enrolled in its ranks through King's College. We have watched their course with great interest; untainted either by neology or by the Roman malaria, they preach the true Gospel of the grace of God, and most have proved themselves to be "able ministers of the New Testament."

Other, and as striking spiritual results of Ragged Schools might be noticed did our space permit; but we think sufficient proofs have been adduced to show the fulfilment of the ancient promise, "Thy work shall be rewarded," saith Jehovah. Yet, after all, these are but the first-fruits of the harvest which shall by-and-by be gathered into the great garner of God. For probably the richest, because most unexpected, fruitage of our united labours will never be known before the day of the Lord. But in every

case we have ample proof that the grand old Gospel needs neither ceremonialism nor philosophy to bring the souls of the outcast to Jesus. For happily it is still true that the *unadorned* Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth."

MOTHERS' MEETINGS, AND HOW TO WORK THEM.

BY MRS. BIDWOOD, OF MANCHESTER.

BEFORE commencing the subject of my paper, which is "How to work Mothers' Societies so as to make them effective means of reaching, educating, and saving the working people of England," allow me to speak first, of their importance. I have often felt surprised that the ministers and officers in our churches have looked upon them as *very secondary* means. It has always seemed to me that, if properly and earnestly carried out, they would be the *foundation* of everything that is good. If mothers could be taught to feel of importance, what I call the *minute* training of children, which is watching over them at all times, putting in a word of counsel, reproof, or encouragement, and binding the children to them with the cords of love, what a change would be felt in every department of Christian labour, especially in the Sunday School. I confess I never leave the school without the miserable feeling that the children have never been taught the first lesson in life (that of *obedience*), and that before I meet them again, all remembrance of my instruction will be gone, or marred by the influence of home. It has been asked, what does the world want most? I am sure every heart will reiterate the reply, "*Good mothers.*" In reading the lives of good men, we see how much they were influenced by early training, and we are not surprised to find the mother of the Wesleys was a wise, holy, estimable woman, any more than that the mother of Nero was a murderess. If, therefore, the impress of the mother is stamped upon the child, especially upon the boy (and he is the germ of future society), unquestionably the attention of all *thinking* people, and most of all the *Christian Church*, should be turned to adopt the best means of reaching and educating them. Is it not truly said that "She who rocks the cradle rules the world?" and while we see the mothers in the highest circles of society leaving their children to receive their early impressions from the minds of ignorant nurses, and the poor mothers toiling only to supply their little ones with food and raiment, can we wonder that the world is what it is?

During the last seven years I have had in my societies nearly five hundred mothers, some of whom never attended a place of worship until roused to a sense of their responsibilities at a Mothers' Meeting. It is a very difficult matter for the wife of a working man, surrounded by little children, to take her place among Sabbath worshippers; but the quiet hour at the Mothers' Meeting is always a rest and pleasure, and soon creates a desire for further instruction, and leads them to the house of God. Is not this an important reason why great efforts should be made to further this work? It is true that in the world we sometimes see a pious mother weeping over her way-

ward son, or a pious son rising up in the midst of a godless family, but I strongly believe it is the exception, not the rule. We never have a command without a promise, and the injunction "to train up a child in the way he should go" is followed by the promise that "when he is old he shall not depart from it."

I must now say a few words about the value these Meetings are to the members, and the pleasure as well as instruction they derive from them. To illustrate this, I shall be obliged to give some instances from my own experience. At the close of one of my Meetings, an old woman said to me, "I do wish we had Mothers' Meetings when I was young, my children would have turned out better than they have done." A young mother said, "My children will have to thank God all their lives that I ever attended a Mothers' Meeting;" another said, "I thought I knew how to bring my children up, but I find I know nothing of training;" and another added, "There never was peace in the village before the Meetings."

I have met with numberless instances of gratitude and affection, and many a care-worn mother has said that our Meetings were her only pleasure, and that she has looked forward to them all the week.

I proceed to the more immediate subject of my paper, "How to work these Societies." I have never had the assistance of a Bible-woman, and I can only give my own experience. I think it would be out of place in this paper to give a *detailed* account of my plans, but I shall be glad to give particulars to any lady who may wish to have them, so many things branch out from a Mothers' Society. It is my opinion that *one* lady *only* should undertake the management and instruction of each Society; I am certain it works better; she can have as much assistance as she needs from young people in the distribution of the sick and clothing funds, and in all the minor duties.

General plans may be formed, but local circumstances often oblige us to vary them; for instance, in a prosperous district, a sick fund is not wanted, and I have been told that arrangements can now be made at a co-operative store, which preclude the necessity for a clothing club.

I am now trying a Society without the two latter. But, in the place where I was most successful, and my numbers the largest, I had all these things combined. I had also a Mothers' Bible Class on the Sunday afternoon, first in one cottage, then in another, and the mothers in the immediate neighbourhood attended; these were very much valued, and always pleasant and profitable to myself. I also met on the Saturday morning (at a room we called the Nursery) any mother who wished to consult me about the health of the children, and I gave them practical illustrations of my method of *bathing* children; all these things work well, and make our influence greater, and the bond firmer—but I always feel most anxious about the *real conversion* of each mother. Without this great change I know that no improvement can be permanent. I try in all Scripture lessons to convey some fresh thought for the week, and urge its practical bearing. In some societies the members are encouraged to bring a text and repeat it at the meetings; but our numbers are always too large. I therefore select one for the benefit of all; singing, of course, forms part of our service. After the Scripture lesson I always read something interesting, and take care that it

conveys a useful lesson for mothers. Occasionally I talk to them about domestic matters—nursing the sick, the importance of ventilation, fresh air, pure water; and the advice given has often been faithfully carried out.

I do not think this work requires extraordinary talent, but only a loving, sympathising, earnest heart; true piety there must be, or it cannot be carried out in all the essential points. It must be begun, continued, and ended with prayer. I once conversed with a lady who had joined two others in the formation of a Mothers' Society, and inquiring about their progress, she replied, "We cannot decide whether we should have extempore prayer, or a form, so we have been obliged to confine ourselves to reading a chapter in the Bible." I need not say that that Society did not exist long. If ever there is a time when the heart is moved to plead for our fellow-creatures, it is surely when we meet those tired, weary, often ignorant, helpless mothers, on whom depend the welfare of so many.

I must not omit to say, that a strong love for children, and a desire to be the means of shielding them from harsh treatment, helps on the work. I remember feeling abundantly repaid for my efforts one day when a mother said to me, "I have never struck my child since you said at the meeting, 'A moment's thought is passion's passing bell;'" and another added, "I never beat my children now for breaking anything."

Once more, I say, that if Mothers' Societies could be vigorously worked in every district, their influence would soon be felt throughout society. I have often found that the working men have been much moved by the improvement in their wives. I knew one who walked from the place where he was working—six miles—to take care of the children while his wife came to the Meeting, and one mother, speaking of the change for the better in her husband, added, "You see, he sees such an improvement in me."

Conscious as I am of the imperfection of my labours, I can yet say that nothing has yielded me so much satisfaction; discouragements we must meet with in this, as in every other good work, but let us be cheered by the assurance that the cup of cold water shall in no wise lose its reward, and that soon we shall see the dawn of the millennial glory, when, instead of misery and wretchedness, thanksgiving and the voice of melody shall be heard in our land.

THE CHILDREN'S DINNER-PARTY.

Yes, this is the alley, narrow and grimy, yet only a stone's-throw from wide and crowded streets. Stoop as you enter, for the archway is not six feet high. Now you are in a new region, for the people are as distinct from the moving throngs outside and the busy citizens around, as the water in the stagnant pool on the bank of the river is from the rushing tide itself. All poor, many destitute, some criminal. This long, narrow alley intersects a block which comprises some 15,000 human beings. On either hand ramify courts and lanes, places and buildings, and nearly every room of each house is the home of a family.

But we have not time to look around or climb any of the dark stairs, for those whom we have come to see are not at home now. Do you not hear

them as we penetrate the depths of the alley, hurrying with eagerness to the school, knife and fork, plate and ticket in hand? How they press into the doorway, for already a grateful odour of roast meats, suggesting dinner, is to be perceived; and now, all seated, the noisy hum is hushed at the touch of the bell, and the whole motley throng seem under the power of a word or look from their "friend" who superintends. They sing—not quite so harmoniously, but at least as heartily, as other children—"Be present at our table, Lord," and doubtless the good Lord is present at the ragged children's table. Has He not provided the meal, and said to his disciples, "Give ye them to eat?"

While the kindly helpers take round the white, wholesome bread, just glance at the groups before you. Some faces are very old, very worn, very wan. How greedily that child seizes at the dry bread; proof positive that of the preparation of hunger. Here is one shirtless, another shoeless; here another in a state of general dilapidation. A poor fusee-seller—one of those ubiquitous urchins who fly about our streets. How came that injured limb, for you see the leg is bandaged? "Oh, running after Baron Rothschild's carriage, for he gen'lly gives us somethink, and another boy put out his leg and tripped me up!" I saw his mother making the drawers of the fusee boxes the other day, at tenpence for twelve gross, and finding the paste! Now mark this child. Before these dinners were established, he (and others beside) has come to school and lain exhausted on a form from want of food, and vomited clear water from a poor hungry-wrung, empty stomach. You are smiling at the crockery and cutlery. Wonderful specimens! Poor indeed the household that could only furnish this mite of a saucer for a child's dinner plate. Biped and uniped forks, and even pocket knives and penknives, and some children without either.

But while we have been chatting, as if by magic the work of serving has been carried on. The plates smoke with hot potatoes and gravy, and slices of mutton or beef, so savoury that your own appetite is stimulated. We don't command silence—the buzz you hear is only "table-talk," and will aid digestion. Nearly an hour has passed, and there are signs of cessation. One note of the bell proclaims silence, and then, "Hands behind." All sing—

"We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food,
But most of all for Jesu's blood."

A word or two of kindly counsel, and the 150 or more are dismissed. Every eye is beaming, and mild contentment sits on each face. You know that your charity has reached its object—it has not found its way into a pothouse as purchase for drink. And a dinner like this can be given, yes, and succeeded by three soup dinners for the same number, for a £5 note. 600 dinners for 100 shillings! How cheap and simple a charity! God bless the givers, by whose aid this benefaction is sustained. God bless the workers, who take the toil and trouble unremunerated. And God bless the children, and feed their souls with the bread of life.—*The Revival.*

J. Y.

IN A CASUAL WARD.

At this season our casual wards are thronged by old and young applicants ragged and shivering. Since the revelation of the horrors of the Lambeth Casual Ward were depicted by the picturesque pen of Mr. Greenwood, more attention is paid to their sanitary condition than was theretofore the case. But, as there is still no classification, old and young, vicious and criminal, still herd together, and hence talk in a casual ward often savours more of Sodom than of a professedly Christian country. Youth thereby becomes contaminated by grey beards to whom to sin has become as meat and drink; and who, "glorying in their shame," boast if they can make our juveniles, as well girls as boys, as bad as themselves.

It is a mistake to suppose that the bulk of the inmates of casual wards are simply unfortunate persons who have been worsted in the great battle of life. Unhappily, few of such applicants can be ranked amongst the really unfortunate class, for there are few of these social waifs and strays who cannot trace their degraded position, either to improvidence or to positive crime. These are there, then, simply because in youth they *would* sow their "wild oats," or more properly speaking, the devil's oats, and so reap a plentiful crop of shame and sorrow in old age.

But still there are some to be found in our casual wards, who are there through the sin of those unnatural parents who care less for their offspring than do the beasts which perish. The following sketch of a visit from the diary of a city missionary is a photograph of both classes of inmates. The two narratives of the life-history of a boy and girl show how much Ragged Schools are still needed, and hence should stimulate us to still more earnest labour that we may save the young from a terrible future, even if the old in crime or vice are beyond our grasp.

Our friend says that—

In a casual ward, the class of people I meet with are men and women whose lives are wholly given up to crime and sin. The men are young, mostly from sixteen and upwards; a good number are mere boys. I have tried a good many plans of communicating to them the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I find the best is to go amongst them as they receive their supper, distributing tracts, and to say a word or so to each separately.

A middle-aged man was met with in the casual ward. Of respectable connections, he had lost his trade and their favour by drunkenness. On hearing his story, the missionary said to him, "You have realised indeed that 'the way of transgressors is hard.'" "Oh, sir," he almost sobbed, "I have indeed."

Next comes a boy of eleven. "Can you read your Bible?" asked the missionary.

"No, sir."

"Never been to school?"

"No, sir."

"Got a father living?"

"No, sir."

"Any relations?"

"No, sir."
"Where were you born?"
"Don't know."
"How do you get a living?"
"Open cab doors, sir."
"How old are you?"
"Don't know, sir."
"Have you ever been to prison; you must, I think?"
"Yes, sir."
"Once?"
"Yes, sir."
"Twice?"
"Yes, sir."
"Three times?"
"No, only twice." Such is a sample of the boys to be dealt with in this place.

The women casuals are not so numerous as the men, but are of the same drunken, dissipated class. I have followed the same plan with them as with the latter, and have seen the tears running down their cheeks, when I have spoken to them of the evil of their ways.

Among these was a young woman about seventeen years of age, rather respectable in looks, a clean round face, with a clean dress. "Are you any trade?"
"No, sir, I'm a servant out of place."
"How long have you been out?"
"Two months, sir."
"Do you ever think of getting another place?"
"Yes, sir; but I have spent all my money, and all my clothes are gone, and I am come to this."
"What do you do for a living?"
"I go out with that old woman," pointing out an old woman in years and apparently in crime.
"What do you do?"
"We sing and beg."
"If you follow my advice, you will go into the union and ask the guardians to get you a place."
"I will," she said.

A woman and her daughter came in while I was reading and speaking. She was clean, so was the child. They received their bread, and the mother took from her basket some fried fish, and they had their supper. I addressed her. "How are you to-night?"
"Not well, sir."
"Is this your daughter?"
"Yes, sir."
"Have you a husband?"
"No, sir; he has been dead these five years."
"What do you do for a living?"
"I go out charring."
"What age is your daughter?"

"Seven years old, sir."

"Does she do anything?"

"Yes, she is an envelope folder in Cannon Street, and gets five shillings a week."

"Are you not ashamed to bring her into this place to sleep with such hardened sinners as are here to-night?"

To this there was no reply.

Such are the cases in one casual ward: and that ward is but a type of every casual ward. May we not then say—Christians, will you not come to the rescue?

HOW BELGRAVIA AIDS RAGGED SCHOOLS.

For seven seasons, the Ladies' Sanitary Association have kindly sent out large parties of children, gathered from the Ragged Schools, and from the poorest districts in London, into the parks, for fresh air and healthful play, with increased success. Last season 539 parties went out; total number of children, 34,655; more than ever before in one season. The Committee of that Society began these parties by paying the guides and providing toys for the children. Next, a slice of bread was given to all children whose parents could not afford to provide a slice; and admittance to the Zoological Gardens was obtained. These kindnesses overcame the prejudices of the parents, and they began to join their children in the parks, and to give them farthings to buy milk. In the fourth season one school sent out its own party; another school helped to pay the guide, and gave their children dinners. The next year the children obtained hundreds of geraniums from the parks, and held flower shows in their schoolrooms. In 1866 much sickness, want of food, and clothing, and a wet season, prevented many from going out. This led the Committee to start dinner and clothing funds, and to send out suggestions to School Committees.

The managers of the Ragged Schools are deeply interested in these parties, and all agree that the health and spirits of the children are greatly benefited by these excursions. This last season *music* has been added to the other pleasures, and in Victoria Park hundreds, perhaps thousands, of poor little children have sung and skipped to it. The Countess de Noailles, who originated these parties, and who is never tired of helping little children to happiness, gave a donation of £10 to provide music for the children in Victoria Park.

It has been suggested that the Committee should endeavour to send these parties out all the year round. One party of fifty boys tried to go on, but found the parks too cold and damp. The children are not sufficiently fed, or clothed, *at present*, to be able to go out in winter parties.

The managing ladies of this Association considering the immense importance of giving food to those children who are ill-nourished, knew that weekly dinners had been found to produce a marked beneficial result on the health of children thus fed. The plan was tried with great success at the expence of Baroness Meyer de Rothschild, in New Tothill Street Ragged Schools, and by others. Having received from the Countess de Noailles the munificent sum of £500 to be expended in feeding the destitute children of

London, whose appetites had been greatly increased by the excursions to the parks,—consulted with the gentlemen, who overlooked the management of the dinners at Westminster, and after most careful consideration of the subject, determined to form a Society, to be called "The Destitute Children's Dinner Society," to be worked in connection with Schools by local committees in the various poor districts throughout London. The Ladies' Sanitary Association confined its operations to the district of Chelsea, in which district 4,631 dinners were given during the past year.

The Central Society was formed early in 1867, and in the year, 16,822 dinners were given in Westminster and Chelsea. In December a letter signed by the Earl of Shaftesbury, the President, and by various members of the Committee, was inserted in the daily papers, and was responded to by a sum of £941, up to the end of that month. This sum enabled the Committee to give grants to the managers of fresh dining-rooms; fifteen grants were at once made, which had provided dinners for 23,240 children, up to the end of the year.

The park parties have led the Association not only to the consideration of dinners, but also of sufficient and suitable clothing for these very destitute children. Foot-covering received the first attention. It was suggested by the Countess de Noailles (see our vol. for 1866, p. 234), that the children of parents too poor to provide good shoes throughout the year, should go barefoot during the summer months, as the children do in Wales and Scotland; that it would be far healthier to go barefoot at all seasons than wear shoes that do not keep the feet perfectly dry—that the feet would get oftener washed, that they would not be hurt by being cramped into shoes too small for them. The money which would be spent in covering for the feet during the summer, could be put into a Shoe Club by the parents, and the Association would aid the Committee of the School in making such additions to this Fund, as would secure good strong foot-covering to all the children of the members of it. During the last two or three seasons numbers of children have from necessity gone out in these parties not only barefoot, but literally covered in rags, while many have been left at home, from sheer want of rags to cover them. Hundreds too of little ones have rejoiced to cast off their ragged shoes and stockings as soon as they entered the parks, in order that they might freely run and play on the grass.

Paris goloshes, French sabots, Lancashire clogs, sandals, knitted woollen stockings, &c., may be seen at the office of the Association. The best boots within the reach of the very poor, are to be had at the clog manufactory, No. 99, Waterloo Road, Lambeth. These boots obtained a prize at the Exhibition in 1862. They have leather tops and wooden soles, shaped to the foot, and covered with leather to save noise, and may be bought at 2s. and 3s. per pair.

The Countess de Noailles sent a donation of £30, besides much material and many garments made by herself and her household, to start the Park Party Clothing Fund. More than seventy articles of clothing have already been given away. Nearly 300 garments have been made for the spring parties, and patterns may be seen at the office.

STOCKPORT RAGGED SCHOOL.

One of the chaplains of the Liverpool Borough Gaol thus writes:—"The experience of three years' daily labour in this gaol has taught me that a chaplain's work within the walls of a prison is very like the man who was condemned to fill with water a barrel pierced with holes; he might fill it again and again up to the brim, but each day he had to begin his work afresh. The Divine philosophy of those words, 'it is easier to prevent than to cure,' daily more and more impresses itself upon my mind, for the work of reformation in a gaol is exceptional, and the generality of such cases end in disappointment." The experience of this gentleman may not be fully shared by other chaplains; doubtless there have been many reformed criminals sent away from our gaols: still it is at all times more difficult to make an impression upon adults, than upon young people.

That this is a subject which deeply concerns the general public, the following statistics will testify:—In the year 1866, the number of the criminal classes "at large" in England and Wales was 113,566; whilst 27,361 were in our prisons and reformatories. To aid in punishing crime we had 23,728 policemen, at a cost of £1,827,105; being 478 constables, and £78,647 more than in the year 1865. In Stockport there are said to be upwards of sixty juvenile thieves, whose ultimate destination must be the gaol, if no steps are taken to check them in their downward course.

It has been stated, and a very remarkable fact it is—that the children of professional thieves are rarely thieves—those who have fathers, never so—and it is difficult to find an instance of a man who has trained up his child to acts of dishonesty, bad as he may have been himself. With women, terrible as the statement may appear, instances of their teaching their own children to thieve, are not uncommon. In these cases, however, the women are invariably drunkards; no sober woman, though her character may be bad, ever trains her child to systematic dishonesty.

The experience of the Stockport Ragged and Industrial School is, that it is much more difficult to reclaim children after they have been in prison, or when the early developed vicious propensities have been long unrestrained by parental influence, than when they have been brought under their care at an earlier period. One of the admissions during the year will illustrate this. A girl was sent to the school who had been found begging in the town. Her mother, a drunkard, was at that time in Knutsford gaol convicted of felony. The girl herself had been twice before the magistrates at Macclesfield, once at Leek, once at Congleton, and once at Burslem, charged with begging, and sleeping out at nights. The superintendent of the Macclesfield police said it was a genuine case for such an institution as ours, and he was glad we had her in the school. Not many weeks elapsed before she absconded. She was brought back to the school from Macclesfield. She again watched her opportunity and escaped, and after nearly two months' absence, was found at Buxton and sent back to the institution. Another case, but of a contrary character, may not be uninteresting as showing that the school supplies a want not provided for by any other institution in the town. A woman brought a youth to the school whom she had found begging in

Churchgate. He had come with his mother from the Potteries, and was living at a lodging-house in the Hillgate. The boy was allowed to attend the school temporarily, provided the woman would let him lodge at her house until he obtained work. With that kindness so characteristic of the poorer classes, she at once consented to the proposal. After being three weeks in the Institution, a hatter applied for a boy, and took this youth on trial for a month. All parties being satisfied, he was at the end of that time bound apprentice.

The material to be operated upon is not always of the most promising character. Take for example a few cases from the admission book during the past year—

No. 1. Beyond control—steals fruit from gardens—will not work—will not go to school—sleeps in the streets at night. No. 2. Family maintained by keeping a house for the reception of stolen property—boy charged with felony three times. No. 3. Will not attend school—steals anything he can lay his hands upon. No. 4. Illegitimate—mother in gaol. No. 5. Companion of thieves. No. 6. Father a drunkard—mother crafty and deceitful. No. 7. Mother lives in a brothel—been before the magistrates for felony. No. 8. Lazy—insubordinate—unmanageable.

The number of children at present in the school is forty-five. Of this number thirty-five lodge in the Institution. The average attendance during the year has been forty-two. The state of the school in an educational point of view, may be best estimated by quoting H.M. inspector's report, inserted in the Visitors' Book. "The children have passed my examination very fairly. The schoolmaster's manner and method of teaching appear to be very good."

New buildings have just been completed. They comprise on the first floor, a printing office, store room, master's office, shoemaker's room, and bath room. Underneath is a large room to be used for wood chopping, and other industrial employment; the remainder of the space is occupied as a covered playground. Whilst making the alterations it was considered advisable to take down and rebuild the small cottage at the end of the old building. By raising the wall a story higher, it was made uniform with the front of the school, and at the same time two additional dormitories were secured. If the number of children lodged in the Institution should increase as rapidly as during the past year, these rooms will very shortly be fully occupied. Whilst making the necessary preparations for putting new windows in the old premises, it was discovered that the stability of the building would be thereby endangered. It was therefore decided to rebuild the front wall, which has improved the appearance of the frontage by giving it a more uniform appearance. In carrying out the alterations the managers have kept in view the great desirability of making the arrangements so as to reduce the cost and consumption of coal, gas, and water. In furtherance of this object, the large old-fashioned firegrates have been replaced by smaller ones, and extra tanks and cisterns have been provided for rain water. Under the strict supervision of Mr. Jackson, there has already been a saving effected, which will be still more apparent when all the improvements are in full operation. With increased accommodation, and an increase in the number of inmates, there will also be an increase in the expenditure, which

we trust will be made up by the additional contributions of friends, so that the school may not be burdened with debt.

WHAT WILL YOU GIVE?

"BLESS the poor little children who haven't any beds to-night," prayed a poor little boy, just before he lay down in his nice warm cot, on a cold wintry night.

As he rose from his knees, his mother said to him:

"You have just asked God to bless the poor little children; what will *you* do to bless them?"

The boy thought a moment.

"Well, if I had a hundred cakes, enough for ourselves, I'd give them some."

"But you have no cakes."

"Well, when I get money enough to buy all the things that I want, and have some over, I'll give them some."

"But you haven't half enough money to buy all you want, and perhaps never will have. I want to know what will you do to bless the poor now."

"I'll give them some bread."

"You have no bread; the bread is mine."

"Then I could earn money and buy a loaf myself."

"Take things as they now are. You know what you have that is your own. What are you willing to give to help to poor?"

The boy thought again.

"I'll give them half my money. I have eight pence, and I'll give them four. Wouldn't that be right?"

"Fourpence would not go very far in making a child, so poor that it had no bed, as comfortable and well provided for as you are. Fourpence towards food and clothes, and books and bed, for such a one, and fourpence just for pencils or candy for yourself, don't seem fair."

"Then, mother, I'll give all my money; and I wish I had more to give,' said the little fellow, as he took his good-night kiss.

A great many persons pity the poor a little, and wish God would be kind to them and take care of them. Perhaps they even pray to him to do it, like the little boy in my story. But I am afraid that too many of them would have God to do all the work. They don't want to help much; they don't want to give away much that is their own; they don't want to trouble themselves much about it.

Dear reader, do you really love your poor neighbours as you do yourself?

HOMELESS AND DESTITUTE BOYS.

WE are glad to announce that the Earl of Shaftesbury will open the New Country Home at Bisley, near Woking, Surrey, in connection with the Refuge in Great Queen Street, and the "Chichester" Training Ship, on Tuesday, the 22nd December. Friends desirous of being present at the interesting ceremony can obtain tickets of Mr. W. Williams, 8, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, or of Mr. Gent, 1, Exeter Hall.

Poet's Corner.

PORT IN VIEW.

THERE'S a Halcyon wing on the wind—Good cheer!
We shall weather the storm, be brave—Good cheer!
The wind may be high, but the port is nigh,
And a Hand that is mighty to save—Good cheer!

The night has been long, and the voyage rough:
We've watched the star from the yawning trough,
With the storm around, and breakers ahead,
And the cold black heaven above us spread.

Before us rose Unbelief's rock in the air:
On the right the waves dashed on the reef of Despair;
On our left was the Formalist sand-bank, and bare
Were the masts of bold ships that had foundered there.

But our chart was good, and our compass true,
And our Captain the way and the dangers knew;
And our timbers strong as we boomed along,
And cheered the gloom with the voice of song.

There is danger still; but bend with a will,
There's a light on the summit of Zion hill;
There's a cheer from a Friend who hath gone before:
We shall anchor soon by Salem's shore.

George Paulin.

Teachers' Column.

CANVASS FOR SCHOLARS.

PROBABLY in no city, either at home or abroad, has the systematic canvass for Sunday scholars been so thoroughly carried out as in Chicago, United States. The whole movement is under the direction of that earnest teacher, Mr. Moody. The following is the plan which experience has suggested; and we commend it to our fellow-labourers as one means of getting in the 30,000 ragged ones still outside the London Ragged Schools.

The city and vicinity of Chicago has been divided into fifty-seven districts for the mission labours of the young men. Thirty-seven of these have, during the past year, been canvassed by more than 500 unpaid visitors, who have distributed 1,065 Bibles and Testaments, 120,000 English and American papers, 70,000 small books, and 265,000 pages of tracts. Many hopeful conversions have occurred through the instrumentality of this Christian literature. Several hundreds of children have been induced to attend Sabbath-schools regularly, and many families have become habitual attendants at places of worship through the invitations of the visitors during their calls from house to house.

Each district is canvassed once a month

at least—the same district is kept to year after year. Young teachers accompany the visitor that they may learn how to work.

It may be mentioned, in illustration of the activity and perseverance of the Chicago young men, that one of their district superintendents reports 300 families visited, thirty-six children gathered into one Sunday-school, and thirteen families induced to attend church, in one month. Another superintendent reports 570 families visited, fifty children gathered into the Sunday-school, and sixty families induced to attend church. A third reports 1,260 families visited in a month, and from these eighty-seven children were brought into the Sunday School, and seventy-three families induced to attend church. The report says: "To no one thing is the success of the Mission Sunday Schools more attributable than to systematic visitation and distribution of religious reading. Every year's experience enforces the conviction that the work done in this department lies at the foundation of all our success, and that, as we insure success to this branch, we insure it to all others."

Children's Gallery.

THE OPPOSITION SHOEBLACK.

About this time last year, a large firm applied to the master of Whetstone Park Ragged School for a lad to work in their factory. The boy sent was engaged at once, at twelve shillings per week, without any further inquiry.

And why was this? Simply because some other boys had been recommended from the same Ragged School, *all* of whom had turned out well. Thus you see their good conduct gave other poor boys a chance of mounting the ladder of life.

Now what was the history of this poor Ragged School boy? Like many others, when he first came to the Whetstone Park School he was ragged, dirty, and hungry. He lived all alone in a dismal garret in Lincoln Court, Great Wild Street. A friendless boy, he got his living the best way he could. Sometimes he held horses, and often he opened cab doors for people who were entering that devil's house, Drury Lane Theatre. At last, he became an "opposition" shoeblack. Instead of standing on one spot saying, "Black your boots, Sir?" he wandered from place to place with his blacking box. But he had not attended the Ragged School long, before he learnt from the "Red" Shoeblacks, who attended this school, how much better it would be for him to belong to the regular society, and so find Christian friends to advise and help him. Admitted into the Red Brigade, he soon won the esteem of all by his industry, honesty, and civility. And this has led to his rise in life. For a good boy is sure to become something better than a shoeblack.

Yet had this poor boy never entered the Ragged School, it is probable that he would have remained an "opposition" shoeblack—learning all the bad habits and the bad language of street-boys. May we not then say with a poor boy, "God bless our Ragged Schools"?

HOW JOE STANTON WAS WON.

A young Ragged School teacher had one great boy, Joe Stanton, who was ringleader of all mischief. The first day he managed to make the school a scene of roguery and confusion. The poor teacher went home with a heavy heart.

The next day she thought if she could gain the confidence of this boy and have

him on her side, she should have but little trouble with her school. As it closed in the afternoon she spoke kindly to him, and asked his help in closing the school-room door. He readily complied. As she turned homeward, Joe followed. At length she inquired, "Have you any sisters, Joseph?"

"I had one sister," he said, "little Mary, but she died."

Encouraged by the ready sympathy of his listener, he went on to tell that Mary was his only sister, and that he used to take care of her, and play with her, and carry her out of doors, and drew her in the waggon he had made for her, and that she loved him more than any one else did, and always used to run to the door to meet him when he came home. "But she is dead now," he added, "and I have not anybody that takes care of me. She had a fever, and she did not know me when spoke to her; and in just a week she died. Her grave is right over here," he continued, "and perhaps you would like to see it some time."

The teacher willingly went with him, asking him still further about little Mary as they passed along, till at length, as they approached the grave and sat down on a stone near it, poor Joe could no longer brush away the tears, as he had done when one by one they trickled down, for the fountains within were broken up. He covered his face with his hands and wept aloud. "She's dead!" he exclaimed again, "and nobody cares for me now."

"I will care for you, Joseph," said the teacher, as she laid her hand upon his now uncovered head; and then she spoke to him of heaven, and the happy meeting of those whom death has severed, and of One who cares for us more than all earthly friends, and who will help us if we wish to do right. Then as he grew calm, and they had risen to go, she told him of her own sorrow, of the father whom she had lost, of her loneliness, of her wish to be useful while she supported herself by teaching; how hard the Westbrook school seemed to her, and how she still meant to do the best she could for him and for all the scholars.

"I'll help ye, Miss Mason," responded Joe, "I'll help ye all I can;" and then, the old mischievous twinkling coming again, he added, "I suppose the rest of the boys won't trouble ye much. They'll do pretty much as I want 'em to." Joe was subdued and won by the power of kindness. And hard, indeed, must be the heart that kindness will not win.

Editor's Note-book.

PRAYING AND WORKING.

I LIKE that saying of Martin Luther, when he says, "I have so much business to do to-day, that I shall not be able to get through it with less than three hours' prayer." Now, most people would say, "I have so much business to do to-day that I must only have three minutes' prayer; I cannot afford the time." But Luther thought that the more he had to do, the more he must pray, or else he could not get through it.

That is a blessed kind of logic: may we understand it! "Praying and provender hinder no man's journey." If ye have to stop and pray, it is no more an hindrance than when the rider has to stop at the farrier's to have his horse's shoe fastened; for if he went on without attending to that, it may be that ere long he would come to a stop of a far more serious kind.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

Correspondence.

PARISH RATES ON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—My note, which is published under the above heading in the current number of the magazine was written under a misconception of the real decision of the Islington Vestry.

Vestries, it appears, do not possess the power of removing the name of any charity from the assessment. Hence all that can be done is to excuse the payments from time to time on the ground of poverty.

Having written in error I must ask you to be good enough to publish this in your next issue, with apologies for having misled any of our Ragged School friends.

I am, sir, &c.,

Charles L. Kemp.

Milton's Yard, October, 1868.

HOMES OF THE POOR.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—In your leading article for November, page 246, you refer, with much praise, to the "Labourers' Dwellings Act." Valuable as is that statute, it has, unhappily, some glaring defects which will, I fear, cause your wish "that parish apathy will not allow this act to become a dead letter," to be a kind of prophecy. For we may be sure that parish officials will evade it, if they can, like other sanitary acts.

A few of these defects may be mentioned. Thus by clause 6, the report of the officer of health respecting any premises inspected by him, is to be referred to "a surveyor *or* engineer" for consideration; while in clause 7 we are told that "upon receipt of the report of the surveyor *and* engineer, the local authorities shall cause copies of both reports to be given to the owner." This leaves it doubtful whether the medical officer's report is to be subjected to the report of one or two officials. Again, in clause 12 of the same act, it is stated that "if and whenever any four or more householders living in or near to any street by writing under their hands represent to the officer of health that in or near that street any premises are in a condition or state dangerous to health, so as to be unfit for human habitation, he shall forthwith inspect the premises, and report thereon; but the absence of any such representation shall not excuse him from inspecting any premises, and reporting thereon." In the following clause it is provided that "in the event of the local authority neglecting for the space of three months after receiving such report to put the act into force," the householders so complaining may memorialise the Home Secretary, who can

compel the local authorities to proceed under the provisions of the act. By oversight, however, the power of memorialising the Home Secretary is withheld from the officer of health; consequently the enforcement of the provisions of the act depends entirely upon the action of the inhabitants. In the absence of further proceedings on their part, there is nothing to prevent the matter dropping through. The medical officer may make his report, but no matter how unfavourable it may be, if the local authorities decline to act upon it, there is no means of compelling them to do otherwise except by a written memorial to the Home Secretary from four householders residing near the premises complained of. How difficult it is to procure such memorials, even where the nuisance is of a most flagrant character, those who have been practically engaged in enforcing sanitary regulations knows but too well.

If then the "Artisans and Labourers' Dwellings Act" is to be prevented from becoming a dead letter, the power of memorialising the Secretary of State in cases of neglect ought to be possessed, not merely by the inhabitants aggrieved, but also by the local officers of health.

I am, &c.,

QUARTUS.

Notice of Meeting.

GEORGE STREET.

A CONFERENCE was held on October 22nd at the above Ragged School, for the purpose of eliciting public sympathy for this valuable School, and more especially with the view of procuring additional teachers for the Sunday Night School.

The Superintendent, Mr. FARROW, stated that unless a considerable addition was made to the number of teachers, this School, which had been in operation for twenty-one years, and had been much blessed both to teachers and scholars, must be closed. But the Committee could not believe that the Lord's servants would allow so deplorable an event to take place, and thereby 200 or 300 children to be left to the teaching of the Infidel, or the Puseyite, or the Romanist. He said that the School was not connected exclusively with any denomination of Christians, but all had worked together with the greatest harmony: the Holy Scriptures being the only rule of doctrine, the only condition being that every teacher must belong to some Protestant Congregation. He begged earnestly for more teachers (either ladies or gentlemen, as both were needed), for they would do good service by attending, if only one or two Sunday evenings in each month; we have often had very useful and valued teachers who have attended on alternate Sundays. He trusted that the Lord would incline their hearts to assist in this blessed work of feeding his lambs, and delivering from the power of Satan those who are now led captive by him in sin and ignorance.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. E. J. Hytche (who presided), Mr. Chappell, Mr. Bower, and other friends. We are glad to report that, as a result of their appeals, twenty teachers proffered and gave their services on the following Sunday, and thus this old Sunday School has been saved from the extinction which seemed so imminent.